

06 SEP 2003

SAPP-Candidates

SAPP LOOKING FOR A STRONG LEADER LIKE DATUK SERI RAFIDAH AZIZ

KOTA KINABALU, Sept 6 (Bernama) -- Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), one of the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties, may propose that its candidates contest in new areas in the coming state and general elections, its President Datuk Yong Teck Lee said today.

"We had been contesting in three main areas, KK (Kota Kinabalu), Sandakan and Tawau now with the increase of new seats we will see how we can expand to other areas (both) parliament and state," he told reporters after delivering his keynote address at the party Youth and Wanita Convention here.

Under the redelineation of electoral boundaries, Sabah has 12 more seats for the state assembly from 48 previously and five new parliamentary seats from the 20 before.

When asked, which area that he was looking for, Yong said no party would tell the areas and the exact number of seats in order to have some room for discussions and negotiations with other BN party components.

Yong also pointed out that the party had announced that 25 per cent of the candidates fielded to contest in the state and general election would be women.

Yong said the SAPP was looking for a good and strong woman leader like Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, the head of Wanita UMNO movement who rose by her own merit and did not depend on a famous spouse or family ties.

It was important because the process of becoming a candidate for election could be a very gruelling and traumatic process, he said.

When asked why SAPP did not invite Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to open its Congress tomorrow like other BN parties, Yong said the party had invited Dr Mahathir to its 10th anniversary celebrations early next year when the party members would pay tribute to him after his retirement this October.

He said: "The Prime Minister has officiated at previous Congresses of SAPP, for this year we invited CM (Chief Minister Datuk Musa Aman) because we feel he is a new CM and our members should get to know the new CM better."

-- BERNAMA

MK MK AAM