

31 MAR 2004
Sabah-Rotation
CLARIFICATION ON ROTATION SYSTEM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 31 (Bernama) -- A lawyer has clarified that the three men who withdrew a suit challenging the system of rotation of the Sabah Chief Minister's post did not vigorously pursue the matter in court after being advised of the far-fetched implications that may affect the administration of the state, if the court were to decide the system unconstitutional and illegal.

Counsel Datuk James Ghani said this in a statement today to clarify a Bernama report yesterday that his clients, Kaiman Buangan, Abdul Rajik Arin and D.Ismail D. Jamlang, had "vigorously pursued the matter in the court."

Bernama regretted the error and wished to clarify that the original text sent to the news agency missed out the word "did not" due to technical error.

The three filed the suit against the Sabah Yang Di-Pertua Negeri, then Tun Sakaran Dandai, the Sabah government and two former Chief Ministers, Datuk Yong Teck Lee and Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, pertaining to the rotation system on March 22 2001.

They decided to withdraw the suit after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on March 27 announced the abolishment of the rotation system among the various communities in Sabah.

The system of rotating the post among the Muslim Bumiputeras, Chinese and Non-Muslim Bumiputeras every two years was introduced by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in 1994.

Under the system, Sabah has had seven Chief Ministers -- Sakaran, Datuk Seri Mohamed Salleh Said Keruak, Yong, Dompok, Datuk Osu Sukam, Datuk Chong Kah Kiat and the current Chief Minister, Datuk Seri Musa Aman.

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