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Call to review Sabah chief minister rotation system

KOTA KINABALU, Sun. - The rotation of the Sabah chief minister's post should be reviewed or fine-tuned, taking into consideration the current political scenario.

State Umno secretary Datuk Yahya Hussin said the system had to a certain extent affected development as there was a frequent change in leadership.

The rotation system was implemented in 1994 when the Barisan Nasional took over the State Government from Parti Bersatu Sabah.

Yahya was responding to PBS president Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan's statement that the rotation system should be abolished.

Yahya was speaking after attending an election dry run for the Putatan polling area, here, today.

Pairin, however, said the party would abide by any decision made by the BN leadership on the matter.

Pairin was the last chief minister of Sabah before the introduction of the rotation system.

The system was mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to enable leaders of the three main communities in Sabah - Muslim Bumiputera, non-Muslim Bumiputera and Chinese - to lead the State Government for two years.

The system has seen the appointment of six chief ministers over nine years.

Liberal Democratic Party president Datuk Chong Kah Kiat is scheduled to hand over the post to a Muslim Bumiputera representative in March.

Meanwhile, veteran journalist and columnist Datuk Mohd Fauzi Patel said the rotation of the chief minister's post had proven to be "very damaging" to the State in terms of economy.

"It is generally believed that the system has encouraged corruption and abuse of power," he was quoted as saying in the Borneo Mail today.