

**S'wak BN to rely on own strengths, says CM**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**March 23, 2011**

The Sarawak BN must rely on its own strengths and not capitalise on the opposition front's weaknesses in facing the April 16 state election, Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud said today.

Taib, who is also Sarawak BN chairperson, said he had told the state BN coalition, which controls 63 out of the 71 state seats currently, not to rely too much on the weaknesses of the opposition that was dealt a further blow, following a stalemate on the negotiation of seat allocation between Sarawak National Party (Snap) and PKR.

"Rely on your strengths. The main thing is we (BN) have (the) good trust (of the people) and a good track record," he told reporters after opening a convention of the heads of Islamic affairs departments and councils nationwide in Kuching.

The 75-year-old chief minister, who is tasked to lead the BN polls campaign, was asked if the disunity among the state's opposition front, especially on disagreement over seat allocation, would fortify its position in facing the election.

Both Snap and PKR are at loggerheads after both opposition parties had made their intention known to contest in 40 and 52 seats, respectively.

On the Election Commission (EC)'s announcement that polling would be held on April 16, with the nomination fixed for April 6, the chief minister said he had left it to the EC to fix the campaign period, which is 10 days, this time around.

The state legislative assembly was dissolved on Monday to pave way for Sarawak's 10th state election. Its previous term expired on July 23.

Asked if he would prefer a shorter or longer campaign period, Abdul Taib said he did not want to interfere with the EC on the matter.

"They (EC) know better. They work at it from many angles," he said.

On Monday, he had also said the BN coalition would announce its candidate line-up with about one-quarter of the 35 seats held by Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), the state BN's backbone led by him, expected to be new faces.

The Sarawak United People's Party held 12 seats, with Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) and Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP), eight each.

- Bernama