

Dompok sticks neck out on Sabah IC

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By Aidila Razak

SABAH Upko president and BN's Penampang candidate Bernard Dompok has boldly said that he is "putting (his) neck on the chopping block" in standing by his call for re-issuance of identity cards to genuine citizens in Sabah.

Speaking to reporters at the Kadazandusun Cultural Association headquarters in Penampang, he said this is his personal assurance, as the matter is not stipulated in the Sabah BN manifesto.

"I am putting my neck on the chopping block. As simple as that. I defend the right (of citizens), and this is what I stand for," he said after addressing close to 2000 of mostly party members at a rally last night.

"I am committed to (the re-issuance of ICs to bona fide citizens) and voters will get what they want if they support this proposal."

He said that the specific proposal, which he deems "the ultimate solution to illegal immigration" in Sabah, is not part of the state BN manifesto as the document is just a "general statement of principles".

"These are details that I want (included) when we implement the BN manifesto and I think there is room for this," he said.

PBS president and BN's Keningau candidate Joseph Pairin Kitingan (left), who was also at the rally, said he too supports the proposal.

However, he said, this "needs to be discussed at a BN meeting ... after the election".

The re-issuance of identity cards is also a key point in an offer by local parties SAPP and Star, if they are elected.

Each has said it will push the issuance of "Sabah identity cards" that are different from the MyKad held by Malaysians from other states.

The issue of illegal immigration is one of four top campaign issues in Sabah, along with state autonomy, land rights, and security - the last heightened after the Lahad Datu incursion.

Indicator of 'transformed BN'

It is understood that the Kadazandusun Murut parties - Upko, PBS and PBRS - had threatened to leave the BN, if the federal government did not create a royal commission of inquiry (RCI) to investigate the fast-track issuance of identity documents to non-citizens.

The formation of RCI is a much touted 'victory' by these parties and is being used in promote claims of a "transformed" BN government.

The issue appears especially pertinent to the Kadazandusun Murut communities, who feel that their pole position as natives has been eroded by the influx of migrants.

The state BN has committed to implementing all recommendations made by the RCI, which will resume its proceedings after the polls.

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