

Offer for Mazu statue relocation still stands: CM
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Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman said today the State government's initial offer to former chief minister Chong Kah Kiat to relocate the Mazu statue he requested in Kudat, still stands.

This was because the state BN government aimed to uphold peace and harmony in Sabah, as well as religious tolerance irrespective of denomination, he said in a statement commenting on the Federal Court's decision on the Mazu case.

The Federal Court in Putrajaya yesterday turned down the request by Chong to appeal against the state government's decision to reverse the approval for the construction of the 108-foot high statue, which would have been the world's tallest Mazu (Goddess of the Sea) statue.

"The decision of the Federal Court which is the highest legal body in the country, should be respected.

NONE"I wish to point out that the state government has approved the application of four-acres of land by the Federation of the Hainan Association for Sabah and Labuan, to build a Mazu statue in Bak Bak, Kudat.

"I also wish to state here that Sabah government's initial offer to Chong to relocate his statue, still stands," he said.

Musa, after witnessing an memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing ceremony in Kota Kinabalu today, also clarified reports by certain newspapers which claimed that the state government had not given any land for that purpose in Kudat.

"Some papers quoted that we have not given land in Kudat, but in fact we have given four acres of (land)... For the statue to be placed or built there.

"So I think the government has been very accommodating on the request of the Hainan Association," he said.

Chong had sued Musa and three others in his capacity as chairman of the Kudat Thean Hou Charitable Foundation, after the Kudat Town Board, which approved the statue's construction in February 2006, withdrew its letter of approval on Nov 15, 2007.

The project received protests from several quarters and the state government had offered compensation for the relocation of the statue.

- Bernama

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