

BN ally seeks to mend LDP-Sabah CM ties
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The United Pasok Momogun KadazanDusunMurut Organisation (Upko) has risen to the defence of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). It wants the rebel BN party to be given a chance to explain its stand on Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman.

This follows LDP allegations that it was prevented from speaking out during the Sabah BN meet last week.

"We have to make sure that the problem will not escalate to a level that will weaken the BN and erode public confidence in the coalition," said Upko vice-president and senator Maijol Mahap. "LDP must explain to Sabah BN and not just the prime minister."

musa aman pc in sabah 190608 01He was calling for damage control measures following stepped up Sabah Umno attacks on the LDP in the wake of its no confidence stand on Musa (right).

He noted that the LDP had also gone public with the allegation that it was insulted during the recent Sabah BN meet, complained about being marginalized and railed against "the extremist notion of one race dominating over the others".

The Upko veep thinks it's still not too late for the LDP to be given the opportunity to explain its unhappiness with the chief minister and the BN "and mend the dented bridge". The barrage of attacks against the party from Sabah Umno leaders would not help resolve the situation amicably, he added.

The Senator pointed out that the Sabah BN has gone through many obstacles from its inception and there was no reason why the coalition could not handle LDP in a manner that would continue to maintain public support.

"It is crucial for other BN component parties to ask themselves why LDP leaders had acted in such a manner," warned Maijol. "We need to understand why the LDP episode happened."

Maijol isn't sure that BN component parties really understand and care for each other by providing an avenue to "harmonise and permeate (strengthen) our relationship".

"If one of us goes sulking, the other brothers should understand why," said Maijol. "If a BN component party talks too much and expresses displeasure with the coalition or the leadership, there must be reasons why it behaves like that."

The senator pointed out that the LDP was the oldest party in the ruling Sabah coalition and had been a good member despite Sabah Umno attacking its leaders instead of making attempts to bridge the differences.

Pointing to path of peace

"This is a challenge for Sabah BN chairman and Chief Minister Musa Aman to win back the heart of the LDP before it reflects badly on him," he said. "The LDP should be given a chance to sit down with us again so that they can help diffuse further tension and escalation."

He conceded that it won't be easy for Musa, and with good reasons, but nevertheless the attempt must be made. The chief minister appeared to burn his bridges with the LDP after he publicly expressed disappointment last weekend with attempts to bring up the aborted Mazu - Goddess of the Sea -- statue project in Kudat during a rare Sabah BN meet last week on Tuesday.

Maijol stopped short of calling for another Sabah BN meet to provide LDP an avenue to pour out its heart to its fellow component members.

There had been only two Sabah BN meets this years after a lapse of four years. The absence of regular meets has been a sore point with the LDP which has taken to the media to wash its dirty linen.

merdeka statement launch 020807 bernard dompokUpko president Bernard Giluk Dompok, (left) likewise, opined that it was not the done thing for BN component parties to pass judgment on a fellow component party. "I wouldn't want to assess them (LDP) on this. It is not proper and it will not help the BN," said Dompok.

The Upko president stressed that his party prefers to agree to disagree when there are some differences with the other BN component parties that cannot be bridged. Still, he feels that there has to be some leeway in the BN to make all parties feel comfortable with the coalition.

"We leave it to the LDP to sort out things with the state government," said Dompok making a distinction between the BN coalition and the state government. "They said they can no longer work with the Chief Minister."

Dompok, who is also the Federal Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities, noted that the LDP still supported the BN concept of power-sharing and consensus-and-compromise. They have also pledged to co-operate with Umno and fully support the prime minister, he added.

Stirring call to respect high office holders

Meanwhile, there has been no let-up in Sabah Umno attacks against the LDP. The other component parties maintain a discreet silence.

Deputy Chief Minister Yahya Hussin called on the LDP to "make use of proper channels if they want to voice out their dissatisfaction with any component party".

Umno Penampang division chief John Ambrose said that the BN component parties should not condone the public humiliation of Musa (by the LDP). "We have to respect as the Sabah BN and Umno chief because the appointment comes from the Prime Minister who is also BN chief and Umno president," said Ambrose. "If the LDO opposes Musa, it shows that it doesn't respect the prime minister."

Kalabakan MP Abdul Ghapur Salleh, one of those being blamed for engineering a crisis with LDP, labelled the party as "rojak (in a mess)" with no future (in BN). "In the BN we are all equal," claimed Ghapur. "If there is something wrong, tell it in a respectful way."