

**Motion may not see the light of day**  
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**Beh Lih Yi**

The  
MCPX

no-confidence motion that the Sabah Progressive Party (Sapp) intends to move in Parliament may not even see the light of day, leave alone the question of whether it will be passed in a House where Barisan Nasional (BN) holds the majority.

sapp sabah pc 180608 02The BN component party announced in Kota Kinabalu today that the motion would be tabled against BN chief and Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi when Parliament sits again on Monday.

Sapp said the government has failed to address long-standing issues in Sabah and that "people have lost confidence in the leadership of Abdullah".

Although unprecedented, the no-confidence motion may not be debated in the Dewan Rakyat because of limitations in the parliamentary standing orders.

abdullah ahmad badawi and lim kit siang and malaysia parliament"There is no provision for a no-confidence motion under the standing orders," veteran opposition parliamentarian and DAP Ipoh Timor MP Lim Kit Siang (right in photo) said when contacted this afternoon.

The mechanism - how it should be debated and whether it requires just a simple majority or a two-thirds majority for the motion be carried - remain unanswered questions.

Even if the motion is tabled in the conventional way - in the form of an ordinary motion or as a substantive motion - the attempt is likely to be killed off beforehand.

For it to be debated at all, the government has to agree to set aside its business in the House, as this is given priority on the Order Paper.

Sapp will find it impossible to raise the motion on Monday because both the ordinary and substantive motions require a member of parliament to give sufficient notice to the House.

Fourteen days' notice is required for an ordinary motion, and two days for a substantive motion.

### **Speaker's discretionary powers**

Lim pointed out that the only way the Sapp motion can be debated is if speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia, who is also from Sabah, invoke his discretionary powers under the standing orders.

pandikar aminThe speaker (right) can invoke his discretion if he is satisfied that the no-confidence motion is "substantive and extraordinary", and this would take precedence over other business appearing on the Order Paper.

Lim explained that this can be done, for example, if a sufficient number of MPs come out in

open support for the no-confidence motion. This would pressure the House to give the motion serious consideration.

However, this is seen as unlikely, as it could pave the way for direct confrontation between the BN-appointed Speaker and the BN-led government.

Lim also pointed out that it is "irrelevant" to table the no-confidence motion as an emergency motion under standing order 18 (1).

"(The emergency motion) only allows the House to be adjourned for an hour to debate a matter of definite, urgent and public importance without any vote being taken at the end," he noted.

percentage of seats in parliament 300408Of the 222 seats in Parliament, BN controls 140, Pakatan Rakyat has 81 and the last remaining seat is held by Pasir Mas MP Ibrahim Ali, who is an Independent.

Of BN's 140 seats, Sapp has two - held by Dr Chua Soon Bui (Tawau) and Eric Enchin Majimbun (Sepanggar).

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz, who oversees parliamentary affairs, could not be reached for comment this afternoon.

In 2004, Lim had moved a similar motion against Election Commission chief Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman and his commissioners, calling for their impeachment over the 'unfair' and problem-ridden 2004 general election.

Although BN 'backed' Lim's motion, it was struck off by Speaker Mohamed Zahir Ismail who held that it could be subjudice, since several election petitions were pending in court.

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