

SAPP : don't waste Sabah's money on by-election
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Sabah's 'rebel' Barisan Nasional component party Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) today asked the state coalition leadership to cease pouring Sabah money into the Permatang Pauh by-election.
MCPX

Yong Teck Lee In a written statement, SAPP president Yong Teck Lee estimates based on preliminary information that BN will spend more on the contest in Penang than the RM50 million they are spending on tackling illegal immigrants in Sabah and Labuan.

BN has sent in thousands of campaigners, according to Yong. He added that knowing the extent and extravagance of BN's campaigning - especially since he was Sabah's BN chief minister before - the total bill will rise to tens of millions of ringgit.

Sabah BN alone has pledged hundreds of campaigners for Permatang Pauh.

Umno Sabah's various wings and BN component parties like PBS are keen to impress federal leaders, Yong said.

For many Umno divisional delegates, a trip to Permatang Pauh is a joy trip associated with the on-going party divisional election, he suggested. The cost of travel, accommodation, food and actual campaigning overall would be sizeable.

Yong queries where the money will come from. He feels it is less likely from the national BN coffers which is near bankrupt as indicated by their failure to settle the RM218 million owing for 2004's campaign material.

"It remains to be seen how the BN will settle the election debts of the March 2008 general election. And now the BN has to face their most-feared opponent in a by-election.

"We call on the Sabah government leaders not to allow Sabah to be the milking cow for the BN election debts of RM218 million and for the Permatang Pauh by-election."

Funds intercepted

Yong referred to the reported RM16 million intercepted by anti-money laundering authorities in a foreign country. The fund were apparently on its way to the Peninsula by-election from Sabah via a third country.

SAPP implored Sabah Umno and other BN leaders to consider their conscience in this matter.

"At a time when families in Sabah cannot afford an extra meal, people struggling with petrol prices, children foregoing tuition classes, sick people missing out on medical treatment, tenants worried about over due rentals and electricity bills, Sabah BN leaders must show that they care enough to do something about the peoples' livelihood.

"By year end, families will face the prospects of higher school bus fares and various expenses

related to schooling."

All these factored with rising inflation and higher joblessness have made SAPP wary about what the future holds for Sabah.

Yong said SAPP will send representatives to the by-election but it will be a small team of three for research purposes only.

"Our two MPs might spend the weekend parliament break to visit the constituency of Permatang Pauh with other MPs."

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