

Verbal duel over Sabah politics

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KUALA LUMPUR: The problems in Sabah politics following the sudden resignation of deputy chief minister Tan Sri Chong Kah Kiat last week spread to the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

A war of words erupted between Opposition Leader **Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Ipoh Timur)** and Sabah MPs after he took a dig at the BN parties and said Umno had failed to bring development to the state after it made inroads there in 1994.

"Umno has successfully made its foray into Sabah and established its unquestioned political hegemony in the state in less than a decade. But, in the process, it has broken every

At the Dewan Rakyat

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pledge it had made on entry into Sabah," Lim said in his debate on the Supplementary Supply (2006) Bill 2007.

His remarks irked Sabah Umno MP **Datuk Ronald Kiandee (BN-Beluran)**, who said: "Why does the Opposition make it an issue when someone has resigned voluntarily to rest. He (Chong) was not condemning the BN and quitting?"

He pointed out that former DAP Bahau state assemblyman **Lim Hui Meng** had not only quit the party but joined the MCA after that.

Sabah Umno MP **Datuk Bung Mokhtar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan)** joined in, saying the Opposition had *hilang akal* (gone mad).

"What crisis in Sabah? DAP Negri Sembilan (Hui Meng) joined the MCA. Was it a crisis in DAP, too? He (Kit Siang) is angry because he lost in Machap (by-election). Sabahans accept Umno very well," he said.

Bung Mokhtar also reacted to

Lim's allegation that Umno had failed to fulfil its pledge to develop a "new Sabah".

"I don't see how you (Lim) measure development in Sabah. In my constituency, there is much development," he said.

Lim then cited the recent death of 11-year-old Kadazandusun boy, **Donny John Dion**, from Kampung Suangon in Papar, Sabah, as proof that the Kadazandusun and Murut (KDM) communities have emerged as the new underclass in Sabah.

"A year five boy hanged himself because of depression due to poverty. This is not only a shame to the BN but we are also ashamed," he said.

Datuk Seri Mohd Salleh Tun Said (BN-Kota Belud), the former Sabah chief minister representing Umno in the rotation system, interjected.

"We also sympathised with the boy but you cannot link it [to say that] we marginalised certain communities," he said.

"Your opinion does not reflect the views of the Sabahans. You should see the election results as a yardstick (of the support we have) in Sabah."

Bung Mokhtar accused Lim of making "seditious" remarks. "Proof. Where is the proof? Prove to me who was suppressed," he said.

Unfazed, Lim said that of the seven chief ministers in the rotation system, only **Tan Sri Bernard Dompok** was from KDM and this was evidence that the indigenous communities were marginalised by Umno.

Deputy Speaker **Lim Si Cheng** failed to restore peace and the shouting match continued until the House adjourned for lunch.