

Sabah backs Mahathir as long as he is PM

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Dr M has understanding of state issues, says Shafie

By MUGUNTAN VANAR
vmugu@thestar.com.my

BEAUFORT: Sabah fully supports Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as prime minister "for as long as he holds the position", said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal.

"I've told him before, that so long as he remains, I will give him my fullest support," he said when asked about fresh calls for Dr Mahathir to set a date for the transition of power.

Shafie said his government was focused on bringing development to the state and creating opportunities for the people and would support whoever held the prime minister's post.

"The people of Malaysia wanted change that would improve their lives through better jobs or development or others. To us (in Sabah), whoever is there ... whoever is the prime minister, we support," he told reporters after launching the Membakut Kadazandusun and Murut community Christmas and New Year celebrations here yesterday.

Shafie noted that Sabah was fully aware of Dr Mahathir's experience and understanding of Sabah issues as he had been helping the state government in resolving various issues pertaining to state-federal relations and rights.

"Dr Mahathir needs the fullest support of the state government

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Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal

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for the tasks to be done," he said.

Asked whether Dr Mahathir would be coming to Komanis to campaign after some people in Sabah alleged that identity cards were issued during his term as the fourth prime minister, Shafie said several senior National Registration Department officials were arrested then under the now-abolished Internal Security Act.

"People in NRD were arrested during his time as prime minister. It is not that he is issuing ICs, even I am accused of issuing ICs. This is the job of the relevant departments, the chief minister does not issue ICs," he said.

He also denied Datuk Seri Najib Razak's assertion that the Pan-Borneo Highway initiated by the then Barisan Nasional government was abandoned.

"The project is still ongoing, only the consultant company was dropped," said Shafie.