

Sabah leaders question ex-PM's motive in nominating their CM

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KOTA KINABALU: Several Sabah parties have questioned the motive behind Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's nomination of Parti Warisan Sabah president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal as Pakatan Harapan (PH) Plus' prime ministerial candidate.

Parti Solidariti Tanah Airku (Star) president Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan believed that apart from blocking PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from becoming prime minister, it was also meant to prevent a mass exodus of Warisan members.

"Sabahans must not be hoodwinked into thinking this idea came from a good place.

"Dr Mahathir is desperate and is toying with Sabahans, using them as bait in an attempt to topple the Perikatan Nasional government and deny Anwar the premiership.

"It was also done with a hidden motive to prevent Shafie's Warisan party elected representatives from deserting and avert a collapse of the Sabah government," he said yesterday.

For him, it did not make sense to nominate a candidate from a non-PH Plus party.

Kitingan, who is also deputy tourism, arts and culture minister, claimed that Dr Mahathir had reneged on his promises many times and should have handed over the reins to Anwar.

Former Sabah chief minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee said by getting involved in the play at the federal level, Shafie as a veteran politician should know that it was a matter of "win or lose, kill or be killed".

"By being the provocative aggressor against the prime minister (Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin), Shafie has burned all his bridges, set fire to himself and has rendered himself completely incapable of performing his tasks as a chief minister.

"The only option left open for him will be to resign and to take his position as a national opposition leader," he said.

Shafie is expected to address his stance on the nomination today.