

Yahya: Divided opposition good news for Sabah BN

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By Zam Yusa

Deputy chief minister says good for Sabah BN that the opposition has still not agreed on seats despite the polls drawing near.

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah Deputy Chief Minister Yahya Hussin says it is good for ruling coalition Barisan Nasional (BN) that the opposition is still divided over seat negotiations as the general election draws near.

Sabah DAP has invited lone opposition Parti Warisan Sabah (Warisan) to sit down and enter into a deal on seats based on the principle that incumbent parties should defend the seats they won without the involvement of other opposition parties.

This means that Warisan will be the only opposition party to contest seats such as Penampang through its incumbent MP Darell Leiking, who clinched the constituency on a PKR ticket.

Sabah PKR chairman Christina Liew in May, however, announced that her party would contest in several areas including Penampang, which apparently was at odds with the “respect-for-the-incumbents” policy of DAP, PKR’s fellow component in the opposition coalition Pakatan Harapan.

And despite DAP stressing the urgency for the opposition to agree on seats now, Warisan has shown disinterest in doing so as the party deems it more important to win the support of the grassroots first.

“It’s up to the opposition what they want to do, it’s their business,” Yahya told reporters after attending a dinner for orphans hosted by the Malaysia Islamic Missionary Foundation (Yadim) Sabah zone and regional airline MASWings.

“We will concentrate on inculcating unity within BN. In BN, seat negotiation is a matter for the BN top leadership and they will discuss and decide on this matter.

“We will find a solution that’s best for all of us. But if the opposition is still divided and disunited, then I think it’s good for BN.”

The Sabah BN women’s wing recently announced that it had nominated 20 names to be fielded as candidates in the election.

Yahya lauded their initiative, but he said whether the various wings would get what they wanted depended on the top leadership of the ruling coalition.

“It’s normal for the various wings, such as women and youth, to nominate people as election candidates, but it’s up to the BN top leadership to decide.

“Everyone has a right to submit their list of names. The top leadership has not called us for discussion on this matter.

“We in BN know more or less where we will be given seats, but whether there’ll be a change on this, we don’t know yet,” he said, adding that he believed a coalition had a better chance of winning an election these days than a single party.

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