

DATE: 18/9/2008

# SAPP's withdrawal good for BN, says Pak Lah

**PUTRAJAYA:** The Sabah Progressive Party's (SAPP) withdrawal from the Barisan Nasional is a good thing as it was a problem within the coalition, said Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"Good riddance. They are a problem. It is okay, he (SAPP president Datuk Yong Teck Lee) is a trouble-maker, let him go," the Prime Minister said.

Speaking to reporters after breaking fast with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at the latter's official residence in Sri Satria here, Abdullah added that he could not give details on the plight of those who opposed Yong's decision.

Najib said SAPP had been expected to leave, adding that the party was hoping that Barisan would make the first move to sack it from the coalition.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that in any case, SAPP's departure would not affect Barisan.

Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman said Sabah Barisan regretted SAPP's decision to quit, saying that at one time the party had been a good friend in Barisan.

"Sabah Umno and other component parties

*The Star - 18/9/2008*  
will continue to be loyal to Barisan and its current leadership.

"We will continue to protect and develop Sabah as well as work hard to fulfil our promises to the people," he said.

On the status of SAPP representatives in the Sabah Cabinet, Musa said he did not know yet because he was in Kuala Lumpur when the decision was announced yesterday afternoon.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu described SAPP's move as not surprising. "The MIC will remain loyal to the BN as we share a common destiny," he said.

In Malacca, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam described the appointment of Najib as Finance Minister as a good move in line with the transition of power.

He noted that the post was usually held by the Prime Minister who was responsible for determining the national fiscal policy.

MCA Youth chief Datuk Liow Tiong Lai said SAPP's move was expected based on its earlier move to seek a no-confidence motion in Parliament against Abdullah.

He echoed the view that SAPP's move to quit the coalition would not affect Barisan.