

13 DEC 1997

Ghapur-resignation

GHAPUR RESIGNS AS SABAH DEPUTY CM

TAWAU, Dec 13 (Bernama) -- Datuk Abdul Ghapur Haji Salleh has tendered his resignation as Sabah deputy chief minister and state finance minister effective Dec 18.

Ghapur announced this today at the Tawau Umno divisional headquarters here.

He also gave up his post as Sabah Umno deputy liaison chairman effective today.

"I've submitted my resignation as member of the state Cabinet to chief minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee today," he told reporters here.

Abdul Ghapur did not elaborate on his reason for resigning but merely said it was over "personal problems".

"I have also failed in carrying out my responsibilities as a member of the state cabinet," he said.

Abdul Ghapur would however remain as Tawau Umno division chief until the next divisional election scheduled for next year.

"I'm still an Umno member and I leave to party members to decide on my fate in the next divisional election," he said.

He said his decision to resign was final.

Although he would no longer hold any post in the government, Abdul Ghapur pledged he would assist the Barisan Nasional (BN) in all endeavours to remain in power in Sabah.

He thanked Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for consenting to his appointment to the state cabinet and as Sabah Umno deputy liaison chairman then.

Abdul Ghapur also appealed to his supporters especially in the Tawau division to remain calm following his resignation.

Meanwhile, Tawau Wanita Umno division chief Hamisah Samad has asked Abdul Ghapur to retract his resignation as she said the state still needed his leadership.

"I'm shocked that he decided to resign from all the three posts," she said here.

The movement would meet Yong and Sabah Umno liaison chairman Datuk Osu Sukam to ask them to persuade Abdul Ghapur to reconsider his decision.

Sabah Umno information chief Datuk Karim Ghani also appealed to Abdul Ghapur to reconsider his decision for the sake of party unity.

Meanwhile, later today Yongsaid in a statement that he had not received Abdul Ghapur's resignation letter.

"I left my office this morning on the way to Kuamut (Sandakan) and Lahad Datu. The announcement of this matter was conveyed to me upon my arrival at Lahad Datu," the chief minister said.

He would take up the matter upon receiving the resignation letter on his return to Kota Kinabalu, Yong said.

Meanwhile, when contacted in Papar near Kota Kinabalu, Osu said he would meet Abdul Ghapur to discuss the matter.

According to Osu, at a recent BN meeting Abdul Ghapur did not give any indication of resigning.

"I find it hard to believe that he would do what he did before meeting the state leadership," Osu added. -- BERNAMA

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