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Dompok - Profile

BERNARD DOMPOK - A CRUSADER FOR KADAZANDUSUN LANGUAGE

KOTA KINABALU, May 21 (Bernama) -- Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, the newly appointed Sabah Chief Minister, is one of the most respected Kadazandusun leaders in the state.

Born in 1949, at Kampung Inobong, Penampang, Dompok played a pivotal role in getting Kadazandusun language taught in primary school, a historic achievement for the community.

After obtaining a Bachelor in Science degree from the United Kingdom, Dompok worked as a valuer with the State Land and Survey Department for two years from 1978, before venturing into private practice.

He is also a member of the Institution of Surveyors, Malaysia, and the Rating Valuation Association in the United Kingdom.

The soft-spoken yet vocal politician shot into prominence when he was appointed as the first treasurer-general of Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS), which came into power in mid-1985.

A year later, Dompok was appointed as a nominated member of the State Legislative Assembly and was subsequently made Minister of Finance.

In the state election in May 1986, he won the state seat for Moyog and was re-appointed to the same ministerial post.

In September 1989, Dompok was involved in a tense party election for the deputy president post with the then PBS secretary-general Datuk Joseph Kurup, which saw the Moyog assemblyman emerging the winner.

After retaining the Moyog state seat the July 1990 state election, Dompok was appointed Deputy Chief Minister-cum-Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

He was also re-elected Member of Parliament for Penampang in the same year.

Dompok left PBS and formed Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS) on March 21 1994 before joining the state Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, following the collapse of the PBS's government.

He is currently state Tourism and Environment Minister.

Today's announcement of his new appointment by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Anwar Ibrahim makes Dompok Sabah's 11th chief minister.

He succeeds Datuk Yong Teck Lee, whose term of office expires at the end of the month, under Sabah's unique rotation system of chief ministership.

The idea to rotate the post was mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during his visit to Sabah on Feb 1 1994, three weeks before the state election.

The rotation system, introduced for the first time in Sabah, assures leaders from the three major communities in Sabah -- Muslim Bumiputeras, Chinese and non-Muslim Bumiputeras -- of the opportunity to lead the state government, for two years each.

Anwar's announcement of Dompok's appointment as chief minister from the non-Muslim Bumiputeras has completed the first round of the rotation system.

-- BERNAMA

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