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Dompok to take over from Yong as new Sabah CM

TAN Sri Bernard Dompok has been named the new Sabah Chief Minister, taking over from Datuk Yong Teck Lee whose term ends at the end of the month.

The announcement was made by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim after a meeting with bankers at the Treasury in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

"I have been asked by the Prime Minister to announce the name of the new Sabah Chief Minister to succeed Datuk Yong Teck Lee and he is Tan Sri Bernard Dompok.

"He will hold discussions with the Prime Minister soon before taking his oath of office and pick a new line-up of the Sabah Cabinet," Anwar said.

Dompok, who is the president of the Sabah Democratic Party, is currently Sabah's Minister of Tourism and Environment.

Dompok will be Sabah's 11th chief minister. He will succeed Yong under Sabah's unique rotation system of chief ministership.

The idea to rotate the post was mooted by Dr Mahathir during his visit to Sabah on February 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 reports: Dompok is one of the most respected Kadazan-Dusun leaders in the state.

Born in 1949, at Kampung Inobong, Penampang, Dompok had played a pivotal role in getting Kadazan-Dusun language be taught in primary schools, a historic achievement for the community.

After obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree from 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 UK.

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 on March 21 1994 before joining the state Barisan Nasional coalition, following the collapse of the PBS Government.

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