

21 MAY 1998

Anwar - Sabah

DOMPOK IS SABAH'S NEW CHIEF MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, May 21 (Bernama) -- Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, 49, has been named the new Sabah Chief Minister representing the state's non-Muslim Bumiputera community.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim announced this at a press conference here today.

Dompok, who is state Tourism and Environment Minister and Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS) president, succeeds Datuk Yong Teck Lee whose term as the chief minister expires end of the month.

Anwar announced Dompok's appointment after chairing a meeting on re-financing of export credit at the Treasury here.

"I've been asked by Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) to announce the name of the new Sabah chief minister to succeed Datuk Yong Teck Lee and he is Tan Sri Bernard Dompok," he said.

Dr Mahathir is recuperating at the Universiti Kebangsaan Hospital here after last week's minor ankle surgery and is resting upon doctor's orders.

Anwar said:"He (Dompok) will hold talks with the Prime Minister at the earliest possible time before taking his oath of office and forming the state cabinet."

Anwar's announcement ended intense and dragging speculation in Sabah on who will succeed Yong since there are two non-Muslim Bumiputera leaders said to have equal chance to be appointed the new chief minister.

Apart from Dompok, the other name frequently mentioned is Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Kurup who leads Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRSS).

The appointment of a non-Muslim bumiputera as chief minister today has fulfilled Dr Mahathir's pledge to the people of Sabah in 1994 that the post would be rotated for two years each among Sabah's three majority communities -- Muslim Bumiputeras, Chinese and non-Muslim Bumiputeras.

-- BERNAMA

TEAM JK rn