

01/03/1999

BN presents 11 new faces (HL)

Joniston Bangkuai

KOTA KINABALU, Sun. - Two State Ministers and an Assistant Minister were dropped from the Barisan Nasional's list of candidates for the March 12-13 Sabah election where it is introducing 11 new faces.

Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Datuk Pandikar Amin Mulia (Tempasuk), Rural Development Minister Datuk Dayang Mahani Pengiran Ahmad Raffae (Lumadan) and Assistant Rural Development Minister Datuk Yusof Amat Jamlee (Lahad Datu) were not selected to defend their seats.

Of the 11 new candidates, six of them are from Umno, two each from the Liberal Democratic Party and the Parti Demokratik Sabah, and one from Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah.

One of the LDP candidates is Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, whose resignation as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department takes effect tomorrow.

Chong will contest the Kudat seat of which he was the Assemblyman from 1976 to 1985 when he lost to Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

The BN candidates for the 48 State seats were announced by Chief Minister and State BN chairman Tan Sri Bernard Dompok at a Press conference at the BN operations centre in Putatan near here today.

Dompok, who is also PDS president, said the candidates were chosen by their respective parties.

All the State BN component party leaders, except for Pandikar Amin, who is the president of Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (Akar), are re-contesting their constituencies.

Sources said Pandikar Amin was expected to be appointed a Senator and made a Federal Minister, replacing Chong as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

Dompok will contest in Moyog and Sabah Umno chief Datuk Osu Sukam, who is a Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, will stand in Kawang.

PBRs president Datuk Joseph Kurup, who is the other Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Resource Development and Enterprise, will contest in Bingkor; Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) president Datuk Yong Teck Lee, who is also Minister in the Chief Minister's Department, in Likas; Chong, who is LDP president, in Kudat, and Datuk Chau Tet On, Sabah MCA chairman, in Api Api.

Umno, the backbone of the State BN Government, will contest 24 seats, PDS 12, SAPP five, Akar two, PBRs two, LDP two and MCA one.

At the time the State Legislative Assembly was dissolved, Umno had 21 seats, PDS 11, SAPP five, Akar three, PBRs two, and MCA one.

PDS and PBRs were admitted to the BN after the 1994 State election and they will be contesting on a BN banner for the first time, while MCA, which expanded to Sabah in 1991, will make its debut.

The six new faces from Umno are Mohd Lan Alani (Sulabayan), Jasa Raudah (Kunak), Samsu Baharum Abdul Rahman (Lahad Datu), Surinam Sadikum (Lumadan), Dr Patawari Patawe (Merotai) and Musbah Jamli (Tempasuk).

The rest are Chong and Wong Lien Tat (Karamunting) from LDP, Christine Tibok Van Houten (Inanam) and Petrus Guriting (Tambunan) from PDS and Ellron Alfred Angin (Pensiangan) from PBRs.

Mohd Lan, Jasa, Surinam, Samsu, Musbah, Dr Patawari, Van Houten, Ellron and Wong are first timers.

In Kunak, Unding Lana is not seeking re-election due to a stroke four years ago.

While Dayang Mahani's and Yusof Amat Jamlee's exclusion was not

surprising due to speculation over the last few months, the exclusion of Pandikar Amin was a big surprise considering he is Akar president.

Dompok said the two Ministers and the Assistant Minister were dropped at their individual and respective parties' request.

Dompok said contrary to Opposition claims, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is the national BN chairman, did not interfere in the allocation of seats and selection of candidates.

He also reiterated his call on those who were not selected to abide by the leadership's decision and co-operate to ensure a victory for the BN.