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Dompok likely to be challenged by Malakun

KOTA KINABALU, Mon. - Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok is likely to be challenged by Datuk Clarence Bongkos Malakun of Parti Bersatu Sabah in Moyog in the State elections.

Dompok, who is Sabah Barisan Nasional head and Parti Demokratik Sabah president, announced recently that he would be defending his seat despite being offered by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad a seat in another constituency.

United Pasok Nunukragang National Organisation (Pasok) is also reported to be fielding its deputy president Cletus Mojinggol for the Kadazandusun majority seat.

The candidacy of Malakun, the PBS divisional head for Moyog, was confirmed when PBS announced that the party would be fielding six of its Members of Parliament.

The Penampang MP Paul Nointen, who defeated Dompok, then a Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in the 1995 parliamentary elections, is not on the final candidates' list.

The contest between Dompok and Malakun will be the second as the two respected Kadazandusun leaders also faced each other in the February 1994 State elections.

Dompok contested on the PBS ticket and won the seat with 6,615 votes against 3,360 garnered by Malakun who stood as an Independent. Dompok, however, quit PBS to form PDS, now one of the nine BN component members in Sabah.

Malakun's candidacy in the 1985 election was rejected on objections that he still owed the Government some money. The seat was won by Ignatius Malanjum of Pasok.

Malanjum was, however, removed from his seat when Malakun won an election petition where his disqualification was declared null and void by the High Court.

Meanwhile, Pasok president Peter Oyong Lobinjang said he would be contesting in Inanam, currently held by PDS vice-president Datuk Steven Kutai.

In Bingkor, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Kurup will be facing PBS incumbent Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan.

Kurup who heads Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah won the Sook seat on PBS ticket in the 1994 elections. Following the redelineation of the electoral boundaries, Sook no longer exists and Kurup is certain to be BN candidate in Bingkor.

Minister in the Chief Minister's Department Datuk Yong Teck Lee said he would defend his Likas seat should the BN leadership nominate him to contest the now Muslim majority area.

Until the redelineation Likas had been a Chinese majority seat and won by Yong in the 1985, 1986 and 1990 on PBS ticket. He retained the seat for BN in 1994.

Yong, a former Chief Minister and now president of Sabah Progressive Party, will face another former Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh, the acting president of Barisan Rakyat Sabah Bersekutu.

Harris had announced that he would contest in Likas.

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