

20/03/1999

Five from Umno likely in line-up

Joniston Bangkuai

KOTA KINABALU, Fri. - Umno which won all the 24 seats its candidates contested in the just-concluded State elections will likely have five ministers in the new State Cabinet line-up who will take their oath of office tomorrow.

It was learnt that of the five remaining ministerial posts, Parti Demokratik Sabah and Sabah Progressive Party will each get two while one goes to the Liberal Democratic Party.

They will be sworn in before the Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Sakaran Dandai at the Istana at 10am tomorrow.

Sabah Umno head Datuk Osu Sukam had already been sworn in as the new Chief Minister on Monday.

Sources said Umno, which had four ministers in the last Cabinet, is given six, including the Chief Minister's post, in the new Cabinet as it had won all the 24 seats it contested in the March 12-13 State election.

The Cabinet will have five new faces - three from Umno and one each from the PDS and LDP.

The three from Umno, the sources said, are Datuk Musa Aman (Sungai Sibuga), Datuk Karim Bujang (Bongawan) and Datuk Hajiji Mohd Noor (Sulaman).

The ones from PDS and LDP are Datuk Wences Angang (Kuala Penyu) and Datuk Chong Kah Kiat (Kudat), respectively.

Four members of the previous Cabinet - Datuk Yahya Hussein (Petagas), Datuk Lajim Ukin (Klias), Datuk Yong Teck Lee (Likas) and Datuk Tham Nyip Shen (Elopura) - will likely be retained.

Sources said the BN leadership had asked PDS president and former Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok to reconsider his decision to quit politics so that he could be appointed one of the six nominated Assemblymen to pave the way for his reappointment to the Cabinet.

In the event that Dompok declines the offer, his deputy Datuk Wilfred Bumburing would be made a nominated assemblyman and be reappointed to the new Cabinet.

In the election, Dompok lost to PBS' Datuk Clarence Bongkos Malakun in Moyog, while Bumburing lost to Edward Linggu Bukut in Tamparuli.

Yahya and Musa are the two likely choice for the Deputy Chief Minister's post for the Muslim Bumiputera quota, while for the Chinese quota it would be a toss-up between Yong, who is Sapp president, and Chong, who is LDP president.

Angang, who is PDS secretary-general and one of the three non-Muslim Bumiputera who won in the election, is tipped to fill the Deputy Chief Minister's slot for the non-Muslim Bumiputera quota.

The 50-year-old Angang is also tipped to take over from Osu after the latter has completed his two-year term as Chief Minister under a system to rotate the post among the Muslim Bumiputera, non-Muslim Bumiputera and the Chinese community.

Angang is expected to complete Dompok's remaining 14 months term as Chief Minister representing the non-Muslim Bumiputera.

Osu will announce the portfolios of the new Cabinet ministers after the swearing-in.

But sources said the reappointed ministers are expected to keep the portfolio they held under the previous Cabinet.

They are Yahya (Communications and Works), Lajim (Local, Government and

Housing), Tham (Industrial Development) and Yong (Minister in the Chief Minister's Department).

Musa, who is presently Sabah Foundation director and Innoprise Corporation Sdn Bhd chief executive officer, is the likely choice for the important Finance portfolio.

Fourteen Assistant Ministers will also take their oath of office tomorrow and among them at least four will be new faces.

The new faces are said to be Dr Patawari Patawe (Merotai), Jasa Raudah (Kunak) and Surinam Sadikum (Lumadan) of Umno and Datuk Siringan Gubat (Ranau) of PDS.

Meanwhile, Osu said he had consulted State BN component leaders on the formation of the new Cabinet and appointment of Assistant Ministers and other political posts.

"I will take into account the request and interest of all the State BN component parties and hopefully all quarters will be satisfied with what is allocated to them," he said.

He was speaking to reporters on his return here from Kuala Lumpur.

Considering the limited posts to be filled, Osu begged for the understanding of all quarters that not all requests could be accommodated.

On his meeting with the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Osu said their discussion centred on State administrative matters and the need to gain the full confidence of the people towards the State Government.

(END)