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Cabinet-Reaction

SALLEH AND GHAPUR PLEDGE TO PUT EXPERIENCE TO GOOD USE

KOTA KINABALU, March 27 (Bernama) -- Three former Sabah state Cabinet members who are making a comeback to the state administration have pledged to use their experience to strengthen the state's development agenda.

Datuk Salleh Tun Said said he would use his experience as a former chief minister and state finance minister to help newly appointed Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat map out the state's development programmes.

"To me, the important thing is to serve the state of Sabah," he told reporters after taking his oath as a member of the new Cabinet at Istana Negeri here today.

Asked how he felt about rejoining the Cabinet, Salleh said he was just abiding by the party leadership's decision when taking up the appointment.

"What is important is that we must build a strong team to bring development to this state," he said.

Salleh, 44, served as chief minister from December 1994 until May 1996 under Sabah's unique system of rotating the post among the three major communities in the state.

Salleh has been appointed Local Government and Housing Minister in the new Cabinet.

Former deputy chief minister Datuk Abdul Ghapur Salleh said he was happy to be given the trust to serve the state again.

"I am ready to serve because Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has asked me to come back. And since I am a partyman, I got to abide by the decision of the party, especially the leadership," said Abdul Ghapur who is now Minister in the Chief Minister's Department.

Abdul Ghapur, 57, who was state finance minister in 1994, said a lot remained to be done to boost development in Sabah.

He said he was willing to shoulder any responsibility given him by the chief minister.

Another former deputy chief minister, Tan Sri Joseph Kurup, also expressed confidence that he could use his experience to contribute to the state administration.

"This combination of young and veteran leaders who had served in previous Cabinets will strengthen the state Cabinet line-up," said Joseph, the new Resource Development and Information Technology Minister.

He thanked the party leadership for giving him the trust to serve.

-- BERNAMA

HAK YBY