

## **Dompok says resignation as Upko president is to make way for new leadership**

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**By Desmond Davidson**

Tan Sri Bernard Dompok announced today he would step down as president of the United Pasokmomogun Kadazan Dusun Murut Organisation (Upko) on March 21, saying that the move is to pave the way for a new generation of leaders.

The former minister of plantation industries and commodities said that the party needed young minds with fresh ideas for it to move forward.

“I had given my decision to step down a lot of thought and soul searching.

“It is not an easy decision for me as party members continued to ask me to stay on. But I am convinced that the time has come for me to pass the baton to the next echelon of leaders,” Dompok said when announcing his decision at the Nabalu Puru Lodge in Kpg Putaton, Penampang.

Dompok, who was defeated in the last general election for the Penampang seat he held since 1986, said his resignation should not come as a surprise to party members as he said they “are fully aware” as he had on many occasions expressed the view that the president must not outlive the party.

“An overstaying leader can stunt the growth of the party. A change brings with it the opportunity for change to further try out new ideas.

“This is even more important today with the changing political landscape in the country,” Dompok said.

Quoting a popular adage by Albert Einstein, “doing the same thing and expecting a different result is the height of madness”, Dompok said what this meant was that party members must not fear trying out new ways of approaching a problem.

He said with Malaysia on the threshold of a second 50 years since it was formed in 1963, this was therefore an “opportunity to reset things”.

“The first 50 years... is there for us to sample our achievements and shortcomings. What have gone amiss must be corrected.

“This is the arena of a new generation.”

To illustrate his point on why he had to step down, the 64 year-old Dompok said if he had continued to be in the cabinet, “I would have been one of the oldest”.

On the significance of the date, Dompok, a founding member of Upko, said it was on March 21, 1994, that the party was registered as a political party. He will then hand over the party’s reins to deputy Datuk Wilfred Madius Tangau.

Upko is an ethnically-based party that strives for the rights and advancement of the Kadazan-Dusun and Murut of Sabah. It is also a member of the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition.

On Madius, Dompok said he “has all the ingredients required to continue the work all of us have done together over the (past) 20 years”.

Madius holds no state or cabinet posts. – March 5, 2014

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