

Reserve UMS VC post for qualified Sabahans — LDP

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KOTA KINABALU: Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) chief publicity officer Albert Kok urged the Ministry of Higher Education to reserve the vice chancellor post at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) for a qualified Sabahan.

Kok believed that many Sabahans had the right academic qualifications and management competency to head the university.

Furthermore, he said the retiring UMS vice chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah and his two predecessors were all Sabahans.

“Under their leadership, UMS has shown significant progress in student enrolment and academic results.

“It proves that Sabahans are capable of assuming the role of vice chancellor at UMS,” he said in a statement issued yesterday.

Kok said LDP held the stand that the vice chancellor position should be reserved for Sabahans.

He said the Ministry of Higher Education should reserve the vice chancellor post for a Sabahan when selecting among the candidates in keeping with the Federal Government’s promise to allow more Sabahans to head State government departments and agencies.

“I believe Sabahans will excel in the role if given the platform.

“We have had Sabahans as in top leadership positions such as federal ministers, director generals and high-ranking officers in federal government agencies.

“The vice chancellor post at UMS has been traditionally held by a Sabahan. It is a consensus and thus there should not be any changes to that.”

Apart from the vice chancellor role, LDP also hoped that more Sabahans would be appointed to head federal government agencies in the State, considering the difference in culture and customs between Sabah and West Malaysia, he said.



Kok

“Sabahans will understand the sentiment of the local community, and in turn enhance the efficiency of the departments or agencies which they lead.”

On the other hand, Kok also took Parti Warisan Sabah (Warisan) vice president Junz Wong to task for his recent statement on sending 14,000 non-Sabahan teachers based in our State back to their home states if the party formed the government.

He said Wong’s statement was unfair to non-Sabahan teachers based here and a complete disregard for their contribution to education.

Kok said non-Sabahans teachers had not done anything wrong working in the State.

“In fact, these teachers have left their home towns to work here and some are even willing to teach in interior parts of Sabah. They have sacrificed a lot in coming here.”

Kok pointed out that Wong’s statement was disrespectful to the teachers.

“Wong owes the teachers an apology,” he stressed.

Kok added that the implementation of Borneonization need not segregate outsiders.

“LDP supports Borneonization but we will never disregard people from other states, especially the contribution of teachers.”

“Moreover, do we have enough teachers to replace the 14,000 non-Sabahan teachers overnight?”

Kok said Sabah Education Director Datuk Hajah Maimunah Hj Suhaibul in January this year had assured that Sabah would achieve the target of having 90 per cent Sabahan teachers in local primary schools by 2018.

“We are currently only seven per cent away from the target.

“This is the promise made by our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak two years ago,” he added.

Meanwhile, LDP Central Youth leader Tsang Hieng Yee strongly supports the call by Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman that UMS Vice Chancellor should be filled by a Sabahan.

Tsang in a statement said that Musa had only demanded for what Sabahans deserves and what rightfully belongs to the state.

“We certainly have capable and competent candidates to fill the post of retiring vice-chancellor Datuk Prof. Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah. Today, Sabah is no longer like it used to be in 30 or 50 years ago, when there was a shortage of educated and capable leaders.

“We have more than enough competent candidates to take up even a few more Vice-Chancellor posts if we have more Universities in Sabah,” he said adding, “the problem here in Sabah is not that we do not have qualified candidate but that we do not have enough full-fledge university.

Tsang was of the opinion that rightfully all senior posts in the Federal civil service should be filled up by Sabahans regardless of whether it is education ministry, health ministry, home affair, defense ministry or any other governmental departments.

This is stipulated in the Malaysia Agreement 1963 where all senior posts in the Federal civil service should be made among those of local origin, he stressed.