

LDP joins calls to appoint a Sabahan as UMS VC

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KOTA KINABALU: Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has joined the chorus urging the Ministry of Higher Education to reserve the Vice Chancellor post at University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) for a qualified Sabahan.



Its Chief Publicity Officer Albert Kok (pic) believed that many Sabahans have 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, Wednesday.

Kok said the Ministry of Higher Education should reserve the 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," he said.

Apart from the Vice Chancellor post, Kok said LDP also hopes that more Sabahans would be appointed to head Federal Government agencies in the State, consid-

ering the difference in culture and customs between Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia.

"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 Sabah 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 of their contribution to education.

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

"In fact, these teachers have left their hometowns to work here and some are even willing to teach in interior parts of Sabah. They have sacrificed a lot in coming here," he said.

Kok said Wong's statement was disrespectful to the teachers and he owes the teachers an apology.

He went on to say that the implementation of Borneonisation need not segregate outsiders.

"LDP supports Borneonisation 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?" he said.

Kok said Sabah Education Director Datuk Maimunah 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," said.