

# Bersatu backs Taufiq as UMS VC

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KOTA KINABALU: Sabah Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) welcomed the Education Minister's decision to appoint Prof. Dr Taufiq Yap Yun Hin (pic) as the new Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Vice Chancellor.



It said in a statement that meritocracy should be the main factor to be considered when filling important posts in public universities.

Sabah Bersatu's Angkatan Bersatu Anak Muda (Armada) Chief, Mohd

Isqazwan Israq Datuk Arsit, said besides "merit", the quality of candidate is also another important consideration.

"We are confident Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik took into consideration these criteria when he made the decision."

Dr Taufiq is the new VC effective July 30, 2019 to July 29, 2022. He succeeds Datuk Prof Dr D Kamarudin D Mudin whose tenure was cut short despite appeals.

Prof Taufiq, 51, who hails from Kota Kinabalu, is a Professor at the Science Faculty, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

He obtained his doctorate degree in Heterogeneous Catalysis from Manchester Institute of Science and Technology Uni-

versity, United Kingdom in 1997.

He served as UPM's hostel campus head and Catalysis Science and Technology research centre head in the past. He had been appointed as Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK in 2008 and visiting researcher/professor at several renowned universities overseas.

He had received several awards in UPM, and was also the recipient of the national Maulidur Rasul award for his contribution to promoting Islamic harmony as well as his contribution to research and higher education.

Earlier, Sabah PKR Vice Chairman Kenny Chua described the appointment as an utter disregard of the views of the

State Government and the people, saying the State Government should have been consulted.

"I'm not disputing the qualifications of Prof Dr Taufiq for I think he has the expertise and experience to have been short-listed for the post.

"But I concur with the Chief Minister that the State Government should have been consulted first. After all, the Chief Minister himself had told Dr Maszlee that the Sabah Government would submit names to be considered if a change was needed," he said.

On Saturday, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal had said the Ministry did not consult with the state government over the appointment, including with the Head of State Tun Juhar Mahiruddin who is UMS chancellor.

Chua said this had set a bad precedent and may even be a damaging one.

He added that UMS symbolises the pride of Sabahans who would demand their views to be taken into account on matters concerning the public higher learning institution on their home soil.

He also concurred with Parti Warisan Sabah Wira Deputy Chief Mohd Ismail Ayub who said the appointment has reflected badly on the relationship between the State and Federal Governments.

He had argued that if the views of the Sabah Government are not respected in matters such as the appointment of a university VC, it could suffer the same treatment in bigger matters such as the Malaysia Agreement 1963.