

Manner VC appointed disappointing: Upko

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KOTA KINABALU: A Sabah politician says Pakatan Harapan has failed to show it was better than Barisan Nasional after appointing a university vice-chancellor here without consulting the state leadership.

Upko vice-president Lucas Umbul said although it was the education ministry's prerogative when it comes to such appointments, the least the ministry could do was to inform the state of the appointment before making a final decision.

"This is disappointing. PH should be much better than this. Why didn't Putrajaya give even a little respect to Sabah?" said Lucas, a former senator, when commenting on the appointment of new Universiti Malaysia Sabah vice-chancellor Dr

Taufiq Yap Yun Hin.

"We know this is under their jurisdiction but this directly involves Sabah. The least they can do is provide information (on the appointment) first before deciding. That's what you call courtesy."

Upko is part of the coalition that forms the Sabah government, besides Warisan and PH component parties DAP and PKR.

According to a letter issued by the education ministry, Taufiq's appointment takes effect on July 30 and will run until July 29, 2022.

Lucas, who is also Upko's education bureau chief, said this latest action by the federal government is seen as "sidelining Sabah's voice".

He said the other was when Putrajaya failed to inform the Sabah government last May that the finance ministry had cancelled the RM9.4 billion Trans-Sabah Gas Pipeline.

"If these two incidents are taken as a yardstick, then it is obvious PH is no better than BN. That is the perception by the grassroots community and I agree with it."

He said such actions are against the spirit of government relations and not in line with the Malaysia Agreement 1963, which promotes equal partnership.

Lucas said the state's input was important considering that UMS, being the main university in the state, should support Sabah's strategic needs.