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Assemblyman quits Umno for PBRs

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KOTA KINABALU, Fri. - Nabawan Assemblyman Datuk Adib Said Besar Sigoh has resigned from Umno to join another Barisan Nasional component, Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah.

He submitted his membership form to PBRs' Pensiangan division chief Ellron Alfred Angin at the party's headquarters here today, witnessed by party president Datuk Joseph Kurup.

Adib, a prominent Murut leader, said he decided to join PBRs on the insistence of supporters "who found it difficult to understand and accept the Umno culture".

He claimed his supporters had informed him that they would only join the BN if he switched to PBRs.

"I decided to leave Umno and join PBRs in response to calls made by my supporters," he said, adding that his supporters, numbering about 3,000, might join the Opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah if he remained in Umno.

Adib's decision was described as going against the principle of camaraderie in the ruling coalition by State BN secretary Datuk Karim Bujang.

Karim said it could jeopardise unity and the image of the State BN.

He said "jumping from one party to another" within the BN could create problems not only for the leadership but the component parties concerned.

Defending his decision, Adib said it was made in the interest of the BN as the coalition's position in Pensiangan would be strengthened.

"I don't see any reason why my decision will affect unity in the BN as I am still in the same house and the only difference is I am moving to another room," Adib said.

He hoped the central and State BN leadership, especially Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, would understand his reasons.

He said his decision should not be made an issue as there have been other leaders of BN component parties who resigned to join Umno.

He cited Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat Bersatu deputy president Datuk Monggoh Orow who left the party for Umno.

In welcoming Adib, Kurup said his application would be referred to the party's supreme council.

Kurup, who is Deputy Chief Minister, said the PBRs would take into consideration the sentiments and views of State BN leaders before it made a decision on the application.

"I will talk to the other State BN leaders..but if Adib's intention is to strengthen the BN, I see no reason why we should not accept him."

Adib won the Nabawan seat on a PBS ticket in the State elections in March 1994, with a simple majority, and was subsequently appointed Social Services Minister.

He was a Minister barely a month when the PBS Government collapsed after several of its Assemblymen joined the BN. Adib ditched PBS to join Umno in April that year.

Following Adib's move, there are now 23 Umno Assemblymen (including two who were nominated) and two PBRs Assemblymen.

The line-up of the other parties is as follows - 11 from Parti Demokratik Sabah, PBS (8), Sabah Progressive Party (5), Akar Bersatu (3) and one from MCA.

(END)

