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Sulaiman, Tinggom had asked to be left out of Cabinet, says Taib

KUCHING, Sat. - Former Agriculture Minister Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Daud opted not to be included in the new Federal Cabinet line-up that was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said today.

"He asked not to be included when leaders of the Barisan Nasional State component parties met the Prime Minister on the composition of the Cabinet," he said.

He said the State leaders, however, left any appointment from Sarawak to the discretion of Dr Mahathir.

Dr Sulaiman, who won the Santubong parliamentary seat in the Nov 29 general election, is a vice-president of Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) of which Taib is its president.

Another vice-president of PBB and Member of Parliament for Kuala Rajang Datuk Effendi Norwawi is now the Agriculture Minister.

Speaking to reporters after opening the Sarawak United People's Party's (SUPP) 18th triennial delegates conference here, Taib said former Deputy Minister of National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Peter Tinggom Kamarau had also requested to be left out.

He said Tinggom, Sarawak National Party (SNAP) deputy president, felt that his request not to be re-appointed was in the best interest of the country.

In last month's election, Tinggom won the Saratok parliamentary seat for the third time.

The party's slot in the Federal Government is now filled by Member of Parliament for Tasik Biru Dr Tiki Lafe, a nose, ear and throat specialist.

Taib also said former Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Rural Development Datuk Douglas Uggah had been promoted to Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

He said he received a call from the Prime Minister's Department this morning about the appointment.

He said Uggah's name was not in the list announced by Dr Mahathir yesterday due to an error.

On the State Cabinet which he had said six months ago would be reshuffled before the end of the year, Taib said he was still thinking about it.

He said he was stuck with matters relating to urbanisation which he would appoint a sociologist to tackle.

Taib said he would give urban development top priority when he reshuffled his Cabinet.

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