

Megat Junid is new

Umno information chief

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Former Umno supreme council member Tan Sri Megat Junid Megat Ayub has been appointed party information chief effective today.

Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced this after the party's supreme council meeting at Menara Dato' Onn.

The former Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister takes over from Datuk Mustapa Mohamad, who resigned last month to concentrate on his post as Kelantan Umno liaison committee chief.

Dr Mahathir said Megat Junid was chosen because he "can talk and is a veteran in Umno as well as having wide experience in the

party."

Observers view the appointment as an opportunity for Megat Junid to make a comeback to mainstream politics.

Megat Junid, 60, has been in the movement for almost three decades since 1972. His interest in politics started even during his campus days when he was active in the Malay students' association.

He was political secretary to Dr Mahathir (then Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister) in 1976 until 1981, when Dr Mahathir became Prime Minister.

He was MP for Hilir Perak in 1982 after the general election. In 1999,

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Megat Junid turned to writing

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he contested the Parit parliamentary seat and lost to Pas commissioner Mat Basir Rahmat by 1,293 votes.

In the last Umno division delegates' election last year, he failed to be elected as the Pasir Salak division head when he lost to Deputy Transport Minister Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib by 11 votes.

Megat Junid, who had been the division's deputy head since 1987, decided to challenge Ramli for the first time, making the contest one of the fiercest in the state.

During his "retirement" from active politics, he wrote a book, "Getek" ("Displeasure") an extension of Dr Mahathir's wake-up call for Umno members to conduct soul-searching in view of Umno's battered image after the 1999 general election.