

Good time for me to resign, says Moggie

STAR 27 JUN 2003

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Amar Leo Moggie said he resigned as Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) president on Wednesday as he felt it was a good time to go despite the party elections being just a month away.

Stressing that it was not a sudden decision, he said:

"I had already decided to retire some time ago. Well, it is a good time now, earlier than the time of the assembly," he said at his ministry yesterday.

He also said that he would leave it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on whether he would keep his Cabinet post as Energy, Communication and Multimedia Minister.

Moggie, however, evaded questions whether his decision would have an impact on the party and if it would cause more internal party problems.

When asked why he decided to hand over the presidency to his deputy Datuk Daniel Tajem, he explained that based on the party constitution the deputy would assume the presidency if the president resigned before

his term expired.

On whether he would defend his Kanowit parliamentary seat in the next election, he said: "I have resigned as party president. There is no other story now. That's all."

In **KUCHING**, Tajem said he and other supreme council members and key party officials had asked Moggie to stay on in his federal post.

Speaking upon his return from Kuala Lumpur, Tajem reiterated that he had reappointed Stanley Ajang and Joseph Salang as secretary-general and treasurer-general respectively.

Ajang and Salang were removed from their post together with eight others as their terms were deemed to have lapsed when Moggie quit as they were considered personal appointees of Moggie when he was re-elected as president in 2000.

However, Tajem declined to comment about the position of Information chief Datuk Dr James Masing and seven appointed supreme council members.

The seven were Dublin Unting (also state Assistant Minister for Social Development and Urbanisation), MPs

Jimmy Donald (Sri Aman) and Billy Abit Joo (Ulu Rejang), Kakus assemblyman John Sikie, Sim Lai Ann, Paul Kadang and Assan Ngang.

He declined to answer an allegation that the latest development in the party was a political ploy to suppress Dr Masing's support.

"At the moment, we are sticking to the date of the TDC. However, the supreme council will have an open discussion on it," said Tajem.

Datuk Dr James Masing said he and his group did not recognise the termination of service of the eight supreme council members by Leo Maggie on Wednesday.

He said this was because the termination was done unethically and against the law of natural justice.

The group would not recognise the appointment of new supreme council members to replace those whose services were terminated, he said.

He said what Leo Moggie did (resignation) was an act of panic and desperation, and was a pre-emptive measure.

Asked on the next course of action of his group, Dr Masing said he would make it known very soon.