

Two teams claim the right to run PBDS

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BINTULU: The dramatic twists and turns in crisis-struck Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) took another twirl with the party now having two sets of leaders claiming they are constitutionally elected.

State Social, Development and Urbanisation Minister Datuk Dr James Masing and his faction held their own triennial delegates conference (TDC) at Dewan Suarah here yesterday and declared that they were elected to lead the party.

Masing was declared president and running mate Datuk Sng Chee Hua his deputy after their line-up received nominations from 153 of the 212 branches which sent about 2,000 delegates and observers to their "6th TDC."

While Masing said he was "the leader of one faction within PBDS," his supporters around him at a press conference immediately declared him as their party president.

"We are the body which has the right to manage the party," he said, after their credentials committee declared all the leaders in his team had won unopposed.

Their TDC was held here when their rival faction led by Datuk

Daniel Tajem, held their Wanita and Youth delegates conference in Kuching prior to their 6th TDC scheduled for tomorrow.

The latest saga which split the 20-year-old Barisan Nasional component party into two was brought about by the sudden resignation of Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Amar Leo Moggie on June 25.

Also elected unopposed were three vice-presidents - Billy Abit, Wilfred Nissom and Richard Will and 15 supreme council members.

Doris Brodie and Joseph Entulu were elected as wanita and youth heads respectively.

Masing and his faction will be travelling to Miri today to attend the welcoming ceremony for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the official opening of the extended Miri airport.

"We are not going there to meet the Prime Minister but to welcome him as PBDS leaders," Masing said.

It is not known if Tajem and his faction will be in Miri as he and his deputy Datuk Joseph Salang will be attending the party's supreme council meeting in Kuching scheduled for today.