

## **PRS crisis over: Two-year problem resolved in two days**

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The Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) crisis dragged on for two long years. Now, it appeared to be resolved within two days. MCPX

On Wednesday, Dr James Masing was declared the rightful president of PRS by the Registrar of Societies (ROS). Yesterday, his erstwhile rival Larry Sng urged his supporters to back Masing in order to allow the party and members to move on.

Sng, sounding somewhat disappointed when contacted over the phone by Malaysiakini today, would only say that he was throwing his support behind Masing and called on his supporters to do likewise.

Sng, an assistant minister and the 'other' PRS president, has been embroiled in a leadership tussle with Masing and his group for the past two years. His comments followed a letter from Registrar Md Alias Kalil on Wednesday informing PRS of his decision not to de-register the party after Masing's explanation regarding the sacking of six supreme council members two years ago.

Many of those sacked complained to the ROS which later issued a letter saying the sacking contravened the party constitution and at the same time asked the party to give reasons why it should not be de-registered.

### **Masing exonerated**

There was jubilation in the Masing camp after the ROS issued the letter on April 1 and hand delivered to the party leaders, including Masing, the following day in Kuching by ROS officers from Kuala Lumpur.

larry sng

A supreme council member aligned to the Masing faction Tedewin Ngumbang told Malaysiakini that as far as he was concerned, the letter had exonerated Masing from any blame and that the sacking was legal.

Asked for clarification on the contents of the letter, the ROS told The Borneo Post that as far as he is concerned Masing is the legitimate president of the party.

Masing is expected to call a supreme council meeting within the next two days, and he has said he will ask his supreme council members regarding the position of Larry and nine others that he had removed earlier from the party for going against party interest.

The happy PRS president was quoted in a New Straits Times report today as saying that "we do not have a crisis in the party anymore. Problems in the party have finally been solved with the letter from the ROS.

"I will call for a party supreme council meeting this Saturday, which, among others, will decide where we are to head after this," Masing added.

## **Status quo?**

Meanwhile, the ROS letter has been widely interpreted to mean in effect the party's supreme council with Masing as president prior to the sacking of the six SC members has reverted to status quo.

PRS supreme council member aligned to the Sng faction, Audie Chua said this means that Sng Chee Hua is still the PRS deputy president with Sidi Munan as secretary general until the next party elections likely to be called soon. (A 2004 photo - Status quo from left Sidi Munan, James Masing and Sng Chee Hua)

sng chee hua and james masing prs support 040206He said Chee Hua, a well-known local businessman, met Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi this morning in a Kuching hotel soon after the latter's arrival to meet BN elected representatives.

Sng Senior, he added, had thanked the prime minister for not de-registering the party and assured him that he and his supporters in PRS were fully behind him.

On Larry Sng's decision to throw his support behind Masing, Chua said, "I am glad as we can now move on and help to strengthen the party and stay united as one team".

It is also learnt that a state cabinet reshuffle is imminent, partly to accommodate the lack of representation from certain communities following the announcement of the federal cabinet line-up.

Certain assistant ministers are expected to be dropped and new ones brought in ahead of the state elections expected to be held within the next two to three years.

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