

**Yong: We are prepared for any consequences**  
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**Tony Thien**

Sabah Progressive Party president Yong Teck Lee has resigned to the fact that his party might have no future in the ruling Barisan Nasional.  
MCPX

He said that while his party has not decided to leave the coalition, the BN supreme council, which met yesterday in Kuala Lumpur, had more or less kicked the party out from the coalition.

"We are prepared for any consequences (arising from our actions)," he told a packed media conference at Sapp headquarters.

sapp sabah meeting 200608 07He was talking to reporters after attending a marathon meeting involving 37 members of the party's highest policy-making body who reached a consensus to endorse the decision to ask its two members of parliament to move or support a motion of no confidence against Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The council however had not made any decision on the question of its membership in BN although it was discussed during the meeting.

The four-hour meeting started at 11am and continued until 4.30pm, with an hour-long lunch break in between.

Yong also told reporters that he was ready for the party to be thrown out of the BN, arguing that "the BN is not committed (to resolving) all the issues affecting Sabah".

The former Sabah chief minister also said that the party would be holding a special delegates conference on July 7 in Kota Kinabalu to discuss eight main issues of concern to Sabahans [full press statement].

The eight demands are:

- \* That the government should be based on good governance and civil society and non-racial politics
  
- \* That Sabah shall have political autonomy, in which the state government will be formed and run by Sabahans
  
- \* Oil royalty amounting to 20 percent are given to all oil-producing states
  
- \* The return of Labuan, presently a federal territory, to Sabah
  
- \* The review of all unfair and imprudent federal laws that have been extended to Sabah

\* A just and fair participation of Sabahans in the federal administration, civil service and private sector, with federal departments in the state headed by locals

\* The immediate solution to the illegal immigrants' problems in the state, and

\* To redress the economic and social imbalances affecting Sabah and other states

### **Solve the immigrant problem**

Yong also stressed that the federal government must take urgent steps to solve the issue of ballooning illegal immigration population and problems associated with it.

He said that it was no longer acceptable for anyone to say it would take time to arrest the problems.

The Sapp party boss added that the problems had existed for a long time and they required "simple solutions" which unfortunately the federal authorities were not prepared to consider and take.

sapp sabah meeting 200608 01Yong also indicated that by their decision today, the party's supreme council members had clearly declared their collective stand as a party on the numerous outstanding issues and that these were not just his personal views, as claimed by the prime minister.

Yong stunned the nation on Wednesday when he announced at a press conference that the party would move or support a motion of no confidence against Abdullah in Parliament this Monday.

BN subsequently called an emergency meeting yesterday to discuss Sapp's rebellion but decided not to take any action against the party as the no-confidence move could be Yong's personal view.

sapp sabah meeting 200608 05Sapp supreme council's decision today sends a clear message to BN that the anti-PM move was indeed a move backed by the party as a whole.

Yong also said that he expected the BN propaganda campaign to be stepped up against him personally from now onwards.

He added that he had this afternoon received a call from the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) regarding a corruption trial case involving a former federal minister from Sabah, alleging that he had demanded for RM5 million bribe.

He said that he had given the ACA a lengthy statement on the matter many years ago in an interview that lasted several hours.

"Why bring this up now?" he asked.

### **No rift in party**

Yong also clarified media reports that there was a rift in the party leadership over their stand against Abdullah.

sapp sabah meeting 200608 06He stressed that all the party leaders agreed before the meeting today to abide with whatever decision made by the council.

Yong met several of his top leaders, including deputy president and deputy chief minister Raymond Tan (photo, far right), for nearly an hour before the meeting.

When asked as to what they discussed, he said the meeting was for both to touch base and to discuss current issues.

Tan, who is Sabah deputy chief minister, attended the meeting but left before the press conference to attend some official functions in town.

Yong said contrary to media reports, Tan would not quit the party and added that no one would be leaving the party.

Tan was believed to be unhappy with the party's decision to move the motion against Abdullah.

He was also absent from the press conference last Wednesday and had previously vowed that Sapp would not be leaving BN.

### **PM's offer a form of bribery**

Yong also denied a remark by Abdullah who said yesterday that the Sapp leader was motivated by "personal greed" in calling for the vote of no confidence against him.

According to Yong, he had never asked the premier for any government post.

abdullah sapp bn supreme council 190608Responding to Abdullah's offer on a senatorship and a special envoy post, Yong said the offer was made to him by Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman.

He said on June 17 - the day before the party went public on the vote of no confidence against Abdullah - the Prime Minister's Department had sent him a letter saying the government was recommending him for a senator's post.

He added that since the letter was confidential he did not mention about it during the press conference the following day.

"It was clearly an attempt to seal my lips, to keep quiet about all the issues that the party and I have raised. In fact, it is a form of bribery," Yong added.

### **Meetings with Anwar**

Yong was clearly in a combative mood during the press conference, fielding many questions from the media both in English and Bahasa Malaysia.

He said the party critics might want to see the party split but he was confident Sapp would emerge stronger from all this, reiterating that no one would leave.

anwar ibrahim pc 120508 03On his meetings with PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim, he said they talked about the Asian Renaissance (a book written by Anwar on Asian politics), about the situation in Asia and about current issues such as food crisis as well as the illegal immigrant problems in Sabah.

Sapp leaders will be going to the ground from tomorrow to meet the people, starting with his former state seat of Likas, to explain the party's stand and decision vis-a-vis the BN.

Yong will address the session in the Likas Community Hall. Sapp has two members of parliament and four state representatives.

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