

**PBS Never Ignored Jornah Mazihim -- Pairin
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KOTA KINABALU, April 22 (Bernama) - Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) president Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan today denied that the party had ignored its former supreme council member, Jornah Mazihim, who joined the opposition after she was not selected as a Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate for the Matunggong state seat.

"She claims that we did not give her face but taking into consideration the fact that she had been appointed as political secretary (to the Minister of Community Development and Consumer Affairs), it shows that we did not totally ignore her, but of course she has taken all the steps to ignore us," he told reporters after the launch of the BN manifesto by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman at the Umno headquarters here.

Pairin said it was normal for those not selected as candidates to be disappointed but there was also a system called "leadership" and its decision must be respected by others.

"I'm also disappointed (with her action) and other parties are taking stern action against their members (who contest as independents) but she resigned and this shows that she is truly defiant. We cannot have that," he said.

When asked if this would affect the BN's chances of winning in Matunggong, Pairin said it is unlikely to happen and the support for BN was still intact.

"We are hoping that other members are not following her step because it is self-disappointment and has nothing to do with our struggle for the people and country.

"Reports from the ground also say that it is not affected by her decision. The action and leadership skills of our current prime minister in solving problems in Lahad Datu, for example, could convince the people," Pairin said.

Last Friday, Jornah announced her resignation from the party due to loss of confidence in the PBS's top leadership and.

She also quit all her five posts in the KadazanDusun Cultural Association (KDCA) -- nominated vice-president of KDCA, nominated organiser of Matunggong KDCA, secretary of Koisaan Berhad, KDCA Women Bureau chief and 2013 state-level Unduk Ngadau committee chairperson, which she had held since 2006.

Jornah won the Matunggong seat in 2004 but was not named as candidate in 2008. The seat was given to Sarapin Magana from PBS who won with a majority of 2,982 votes.

Sarapin is being challenged by Richard Jiun (Sabah Progressive Party), Marusai Dawai (State Reform Party) and Jolius Majawai (Independent) in the May 5 election.

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