

Cheung may run for Legco seat

By Jessie Yim

POLITICAL heavyweight Mr Cheung Yan-lung is likely to stand for the Legislative Council elections through the Regional Council constituency this autumn.

The 66-year-old politician told *The Standard* his decision to join the election fray depended on whether he was re-appointed to the Legco this summer.

But he reckoned his chances of being re-appointed were slim.

Mr Cheung has been an appointed Legco member for eight years. He is also the chairman of the Regional Council and an executive committee member of the Heung Yee Kuk.

He has yet to consult his Regional Council colleagues on his possible political move.

Meanwhile, another appointed Legco member, Mr Chan Ying-lun, yesterday decided to compete in the forthcoming Legco elections.

In a press statement, Mr Chan said he will go through the Island East constituency which is made up of the Eastern and Wan Chai District Boards.

The 38-year-old politician was appointed to Legco in 1983. He was also an elected Eastern District Board member.

He said democratic developments in recent years had "led him to feel strongly" that there is a big difference between an appointed and an elected member.

He said he chose to become an elected member to speak for local residents.

Mr Cheung Yan-lung, however, said he would try to win election to the Legco through the Regional Council if the Governor did not re-appoint him.

"Usually the term for an appointed Legco member is six years. I don't think the Governor will re-appoint me this time," he said.

The Legco elections will take place on September 22.

The Government recently wrote to the Heung Yee Kuk, promising to appoint a senior kuk member to the Legco. Insiders tipped kuk chairman Mr Lau Wong-fat as the most likely candidate.

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"If this is so, my role of speaking for the New Territories would be diminished," Mr Cheung said.

Insiders told *The Standard* the appointment of a kuk member to the Legco is an apparent Government consolation for the kuk after its unsuccessful campaign to become a functional constituency.

If Mr Cheung wants to return to the Legco through the Regional Council constituency, he will have to "reach an understanding" with Mr Lau, the current representative.

Insiders said Mr Lau's support would be very important as more than 10 council members had strong links with the kuk.

But *The Standard* learned Mr Cheung and Mr Lau had yet to talk things over.

To secure other Regional Council members' support, Mr Cheung might have to give up the council chairmanship.

Insiders believed council members were unlikely to allow Mr Cheung to wear two important hats at the same time.

Mr Cheung would not predict his chances of success in the election. He said he would start lobbying after the Government announced the list of appointed members for Legco at the end of August.

Mr Cheung said he had a strong desire to work for the public for another five years until he was 70. "I will gradually retire then and concentrate more on my business," he said.

One Regional Council member believed Mr Cheung stood a good chance of being elected to the Legco as he would be able to canvass support from all political forces inside the council.