

20/12/2002

SUPP leaders told to master diverse skills

KUCHING, Thurs. - Leaders in the Sarawak Unity People's Party (SUPP) were today advised to acquire diverse skills to develop a strong team of professional politicians.

In making the call, party president Tan Sri Dr George Chan urged members to keep up with the latest technological trend to attain professional politician status.

Dr Chan said only capable and qualified leaders would be able to steer the party towards achieving greater progress.

Thus, he suggested the party adopt a resolution to develop a strong team of professional politicians as one of its resolutions in the party's conference.

"For SUPP to be effective in serving the people and in policy-making, it is imperative that we have a united, committed and knowledgeable team of leaders," he said at the opening of SUPP 19th delegates conference here.

He quoted author C. Wright Mills who described professional politicians as the second echelon of power elites who acted as advisers, consultants, spokesman and opinion makers for the government.

Dr Chan hoped SUPP leaders would find wisdom in Mills' belief and learn the ropes in becoming professional politicians who could communicate well, have good understanding of the political functions, know how to garner consensus and have the ability to interact with the government, party supporters and even rivals.

"An effective political leader is one who has self-confidence and not intimidated by pressure, who thrives on challenge and who is comfortable in an environment of constant change and ambiguity," said Dr Chan, adding that such qualities could only be found in Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir opened the conference.

Dr Chan also took the opportunity to pay tribute to Dr Mahathir, whom he described as a capable leader who had carved a good name for Malaysia both locally and abroad.

"Although Dr Mahathir had announced his desire to step down in October next year, we in SUPP will not forget his contributions to the country and its people. We will continue to subscribe and work hard to achieve the Vision 2020," said Dr Chan.