

SARAWAK
**THE
PLOT
THAT FAILED**

10 march 87 - 17 april 87

YU LOON CHING

SUMMER TIMES



*Cover photo:
Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud
being chaired by supporters at
Central Padang.*

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PREFACE

The State Legislature Assembly also known as Council Negeri or Dewan Undangan Negeri was dissolved on 13 March 1987 by the Sarawak Yang di-Pertua Negeri (Governor) Datuk Patinggi Haji Ahmad Zaidi Adruce bin Mohamed Noor following an attempt to topple the Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud by Kumpulan Bersatu later known as Kumpulan Maju.

A snap election was held on 15th and 16th of April 1987. The B N State Government under the leadership of Datuk Abdul Taib was challenged by Maju Group, a combined force of Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) a Dayak based Party and Parti Permas, a newly registered political party headed by Tun Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Yakub the former Chief Minister and Sarawak Head of State until April 1985. Also contesting in the State election were 16 Independents.

The Barisan National won a simple majority of 28 out of 48 seats. Maju Group took 20 with PBDS 15 seats and Parti Maju 5 seats.

The main issues of the snap election were timber concession, Dayakism, the politics of development and the feud between uncle and nephew.

The first time Sarawak experienced a political squabble between uncle and nephew was 1946 between Charles Vyner Brooke, the 3rd Rajah of Sarawak and his nephew Anthony Brooke.

There were many happenings during the heated snap election. Words that must be said were said; words that ought not to have been said were also uttered, making this snap election the most exciting and memorable one in Sarawak's political history.

The snap election also saw for the first time in history the upsurge of Dayakism in Sarawak. This was fully exploited by PBDS.

The main feature of this book contains selected presscuttings chronologically arranged following the events of development. A brief Introduction glances through briefly the known causes and events leading to the plot that failed.

YU LOON CHING

KUCHING

7 June 1987

INTRODUCTION

Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud won the Sebandi by-election in 1981 unopposed, a seat vacated by Sharifah Mordiah Tuanku Haji Fauzi to pave the way for Datuk Abdul Taib's return to active politics in Sarawak.

Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib served in various Ministries in the Federal Government from 1967 as Assistant Minister, Deputy Minister and Full Minister. The last portfolio he held in 1980 was as Minister for the Federal Territory.

Datuk Haji Abdul Rahman Yakub, the uncle of Datuk Abdul Taib became the Third Chief Minister of Sarawak on 7th July 1970 after Datuk Stephen Kalon Ningkan and Datuk Tawi Sli, both Dayak Ibans.

Datuk Abdul Rahman's involvement in politics began soon after he returned from his law studies in the United Kingdom in the late 50s. He gained his political prominence when he was appointed Chairman of the Sarawak Alliance Election Committee in 1964. Though he was defeated in the Kuching Municipal Council Election in 1963, he was selected as the State nominated member in the Parliament by Datuk Stephen Kalon Ningkan, the First Chief Minister of Sarawak. Datuk Abdul Rahman was appointed as Assistant Minister of Rural Development in the Federal Government. Two years later he was made a Full Minister holding the portfolio of Lands and Mines and in 1969 he became the Minister of Education in Tun Razak's National Operation Council after the May 13 incident.



Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib won the Sebandi by-election unopposed.