

## **Sarawak DAP to contest in 32 state seats**

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**By Dukau Papau**

Sarawak DAP may contest 32 state seats in the Sarawak state election, which is due in 2016 but could be called earlier, in 2015.

"Sarawak DAP has identified 20 rural seats for contest in the coming state election, apart from defending the 12 urban and semi-urban constituencies we hold," outgoing state DAP chairperson Wong Ho Leng said.

Addressing more than 120 delegates at the 13th state DAP convention today, Wong (right) said: "Now that we have identified the seats, we need to work very hard.

"We must cooperate with all the opposition political parties, PKR, PAS and even with the Sarawak Workers Party to ensure that we break the BN hold.

"We have had tremendous success in the urban constituencies. We see not only Chinese support but also Iban and Malay support in the urban constituencies."

Wong, who is Bukit Assek assemblyperson, is stepping down as chairman of the state DAP for the past 13 years, because of his illness.

The Sarawak DAP has been credited with a lot of growth and progress under his leadership.

"GE13 saw an improvement in DAP. We have kept improving since GE12 in 2008 and in the 2011 Sarawak state election.

"We are now the second largest party in the state," he said.

In the 2006 state election, the DAP took six state seats and in the last state election, the party won 12 state seats.

'Do not rest on your laurels'

Warning members not rest on their laurels, Wong said: "We have not succeeded in toppling the corrupt BN regime. Where we failed, we must succeed in the next election.

"We owe it to the people to replace the regime that is corrupt to the core.

"We must get ready to face the state election in some 24 months. That will be the time when we must bid goodbye to the Taib administration," Wong said, referring to the Sarawak BN government under Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud.

He said the Belaga boat tragedy spoke volumes of the neglect of the Sarawak interiors by the state government, especially in areas lacking in infrastructures such as roads.

"The rural areas also do not have amenities such as water and electricity. These rural folks are the victims of money politics played by the BN politicians.

"We must give them better lives and inculcate democratic ideals in them. But to improve the overall lives of Sarawakians, we need a tsunami, not only at the urban level, but in the rural constituencies too," Wong said.

Encouraged by voters in rural areas

DAP is encouraged by the good response from the rural voters during the recently concluded general election.

"DAP has now identified 20 rural constituencies where we must put in more effort," he added.

Stressing the importance of discipline among party members, Wong said: "Winning elections is important, but inculcating discipline in all branches is equally, if not more, important.

"Due to lack of discipline among certain members in Miri, DAP lost the opportunity to contest the Miri parliamentary seat.

"With discipline, DAP could have won win this seat, and with a bigger majority even," he said.

Due to the internal bickering in DAP in Miri, the Miri seat was given to PKR, which won it with a majority of 1,992 votes.

The one-day DAP convention, which will elect a new line-up for the state, was officiated by DAP secretary-general and Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

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