

Sarawak DAP files motion for oil royalty increase
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Sarawak DAP Member of Parliament for Bandar Kuching Chong Chieng Jen said today that he had submitted a motion to Parliament to discuss the increase of oil and gas royalty from 5 percent to 20 percent as unanimously agreed upon by the Sarawak state legislative assembly on May 6, 2014.

Parliament will begin its sitting on June 10, 2014.

Speaking at a press conference, Chong wanted to move this motion in Parliament to support continuous efforts by the Barisan Nasional state government, requesting for a revision of the said Tripartite Agreement signed between the federal government, the state government and Petronas pursuant to Section 4 of the Petroleum Act 1974.

“The intention of the motion is to seek consideration from the federal government to increase the said royalty payment of 5 percent on the value of oil and gas to 20 percent to be paid to the Sarawak state government.

“If the request is deemed favourable and reasonable, payment can be any other form of arrangement to benefit the state of Sarawak so as to accelerate more development programmes, particularly in the rural areas,” he said.

Chong said that the 5 percent received by the state as payment of royalty was inadequate, little and unjustified considering the fact that oil and gas are Sarawak’s natural resources.

Sarawak received an average of RM1.6 billion a year, and with the increase it should be receiving RM6.4 billion.

“Sarawak needs this increase in royalty of oil and gas in order to increase its economic development as well as to develop its infrastructure, which is about 20 years behind that of peninsula Malaysia,” he said.

Chong said that he would be meeting with the minister in charge of Parliament, Shahidan Kassim, to give priority to the motion.

“I hope the motion can get through, and if it does, I urge all MPs from Sarawak, be they from Barisan Nasional or Parti Tenaga Rakyat Sarawak, to support the motion.

“For Pakatan Rakyat I can assure you they will support the motion. What we need is a simple majority in Parliament, of which Sarawak MPs and Pakatan MPs can provide that majority.

“However, it would be good if MPs from Sabah can vote for the motion because the oil increase will also benefit them,” he said.

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