

**PM urged to back Sarawak demand for 20pct royalty**  
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Sarawakians are watching Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak closely on whether he will be sincere in acceding to the Sarawak state assembly motion unanimously passed in May this year for the state's oil and gas royalty to be increased from the current five percent to 20 percent.

"If he is sincere, then Najib should allow my motion to take precedence over the government business on Thursday, so that the Dewan Rakyat will have a chance to discuss and vote for my motion," the MP for Bandar Kuching Chong Chieng Jen said.

"I have prepared a petition calling on the prime minister, as the leader of the House, to invoke Standing Order 14(2) of the Dewan Rakyat to allow my 'Motion on 20 percent Oil Royalty for Sarawak' to take precedence over government business on Thursday, June 19, 2014."

Chong's motion on the oil royalty for Sarawak calls for two resolutions be made in the Dewan Rakyat:

1. That the federal government agrees with the Sarawak state assembly and Sarawak state government request to increase the oil and gas royalty payable to Sarawak in lieu of oil and gas rights from the present five percent to 20 percent of the gross value of oil and gas extracted from the waters surrounding Sarawak; and
2. That the federal government shall, within this year, put into effect all legal documentation for the increment of the said royalty rights from five percent to 20 percent.

"Without invoking Standing Order 14(2) to allow my oil royalty motion to take precedence over government business, by normal Malaysian parliamentary practice, my motion will never see the light of the day and will lapse at the end of this sitting," said Chong, who is Sarawak DAP chief.

Most Pakatan MPs have signed petition

It was therefore imperative, he said, for Najib to be sincere about acceding to the Sarawak demand for 20 percent oil royalty and to allow his motion to take precedence over government business on Thursday.

This would enable the Dewan Rakyat to discuss and vote on his motion, especially since most of the Pakatan Rakyat MPs have signed his petition for the motion.

“While I welcome all BN MPs to support this petition, the key question is, will the BN Sarawak MPs also support this petition, given that their counterparts in the state assembly and the chief minister of Sarawak have openly called for the oil royalty for Sarawak be increased to 20 percent?” Chong asked.

He pointed out that Pakatan has 88 MPs in Parliament, while the Sarawak BN has 25 MPs.

“Together, we have 123 MPs, which forms a simple majority in the House. If the 22 MPs from the Sabah BN join in the support, we will almost have a two-thirds majority in numbers.

“By convention, the prime minister cannot reject a request or petition coming from more than 50 percent of the members of the august House,” Chong added.

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