

## **PM, CM meet SPDP amid complaints of being shortchanged**

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**Kow Gah Chie**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, who is also BN chairperson, has promised to assist the Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) amid complaints of being shortchanged.

This was according to the party's senior vice-president Paul Igai, who revealed that an impromptu meeting between Najib, Sarawak Chief Minister Adenan Satem and SPDP president Tiong King Sing (photo) took place in Sibu yesterday morning.

He said SPDP had voiced concern over its survival to the prime minister and chief minister during the meeting, which lasted for almost an hour.

SPDP is left with no representatives in the state legislative assembly following its ex-president William Mawan Ikom and four incumbent state assemblypersons forming a splinter party called Teras.

Adenan had allocated three out of SPDP's eight traditional seats to the splinter party.

In the 2011 state election, SPDP contested in Tasik Biru, Pakan, Meluan, Bekenu, Marudi, Batu Danau, Ba'kelalan and Krian.

Ba'kelalan and Krian fell to Sarawak PKR chairperson Baru Bian and vice-chair Ali Biju respectively.

SPDP's dilemma is similar to that of Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), where seven out of its 19 traditional seats were allocated to the splinter United People's Party (UPP).

The candidates from both UPP and Teras were asked to resign and contest as BN direct candidates.

### **Still loyal to BN**

Meanwhile, Paul also brushed aside speculation that SPDP would quit BN out of frustration.

"This notion has never cross our minds, we are true loyalists of BN," he told Malaysiakini.

"(When we met both Najib and Adenan,) we also told them that we are their staunch supporters," he added.

During the meeting, he said, both leaders also assured that SPDP is needed in BN.

Paul, who is also political secretary to the chief minister, admitted that SPDP felt slighted

over Adenan's decision.

He, however said the party understood the chief minister's predicament.

Paul said his party is hoping that Adenan would allocate more seats to SPDP, noting that no announcement has been made with regard to the Tasik Biru and Marudi seats.

Adenan is expected to give the letters to all 82 BN candidates this afternoon in Kuching.

Sarawak would be holding its 11th state election on May 7, with nomination fixed for April 25.

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