

**Chong flays Taib's 'don't destroy BN' plea**  
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Kuching MP Chong Chieng Jen is perplexed that Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud, a law graduate and former magistrate, would "stoop so low" as to link his now uncertain political future with the long-discredited concept of BN as a sacred cow.

"Taib's statement in Balingian earlier this week is full of flaws and fallacies," said Chong, who is one of two DAP MPs in Sarawak. "It's just so much nonsense to suggest that the people should not destroy the BN just because they don't like certain personalities."

sibu forum penang 260510 chong chien jenTaib, noted Chong (left), labours under the misconception that the people are naïve and gullible and can be persuaded that to go against him is to destroy the BN, and thereby the government, society and the state.

"Hasn't Taib leached enough of the people for over 30 years? Must he shamelessly come up with notions that can help him and his family to continue to milk Sarawak even further?"

Chong pointed out that first of all, the BN should not be equated with the notion of a government in perpetuity.

The BN is only the ruling party for five years, having been given the mandate by the people to spearhead the government. But it is the civil service that is a permanent establishment, and it will go on even if there is a change of political masters, he noted.

The loyalty of the civil service, Chong said, must always be to the government of the day, as mandated by the people.

Voting out the BN, Chong reiterated, is not tantamount to destroying it.

"The BN, or what is left of it after the elections, has to simply warm the opposition benches in the state assembly and lick its wounds."

taib mahmudWhy Taib should go

The Pakatan Rakyat, according to Chong, has nothing against Taib (right) personally but is determined to persuade the people of Sarawak to kick him out at the next state elections.

Chong lists unfair land policies as topping the list of grievances against the Taib government.

He charged that while it was very difficult for ordinary people to hold on to what little land they had by native customary rights, or even apply for state land, Taib, his family and their cronies seemed to have no problem increasing their land bank even under dormant companies which can be sold for a small fortune to Peninsular Malaysian plantation companies.

Chong also described the present law on lease land as unfair since it stipulates that land goes back to the government upon expiry of the lease, since there's no automatic renewal.

"Those who want the same land again have to apply all over again and pay a hefty premium to own the same property that they had before the expiry of the lease," said Chong. "If the

government does not renew the lease, as in the case of Sibu after the recent by-election, the ex-owners lose their land."

A Pakatan Sarawak government, assured Chong, would allow for automatic renewal of expired land leases "since there are other laws which allow for acquisition of private property for public purposes".

The state-owned Sarawak Electricity Supply Corporation (Sesco) is one of the rogue GLCs high on P radar screen.

Sesco, as the public complaints gathered by PR go, "fleeces" the consumers to the tune of RM4,000 to RM5,000 in capital contribution per terrace house, besides burdening them with a collateral deposit of a few thousand ringgit and high tariff, among others.

Smelting plants, however, get power at half the rate that the ordinary consumers pay.

The huge revenues generated by Sesco, claimed Chong, have gone into dubious investments like 1st Silicon and the moribund Sarawak International Medical Centre.

Awarded without tender

Chong also alleged that lucrative state government contracts were being awarded to Taib's family without tenders being called. This has forced many genuine contractors in the state to work as sub-contractors, "sub-sub contractors and even sub-sub-sub contractors".

This practice, the Kuching MP charged, amounted to plundering the public treasury since the final bill to the state government would be many times what it would have been, had the contracts been tendered out properly to genuine operators.

Last, but not least, Chong is outraged that Taib is travelling around jet-set style in a Rolls Royce, even on the dirt tracks in poverty-stricken rural areas, and amassing undreamed of wealth abroad.

Meanwhile, the people in general wallow in a vicious cycle of poverty, ignorance and disease in one of the poorest states in Malaysia.

Chong urged Taib not to sulk over the fact that people in general would like to see the back of him as soon as possible.

"It's pointless for Taib to make threats against the people," he warned. "The right thing to do is to make the policies fair and the system transparent. Taib is unlikely to do this since he doesn't stand to benefit personally."

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