

SUPP to contest 19 seats in S'wak elections
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The Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) is to contest 19 seats in the next state elections as it did in the last, with 30 per cent of the candidates being new faces, party president Dr George Chan said today.

He also said that the party had decided whom to field in about 50 per cent of the seats but had yet to finalise the candidates for the remaining number as there were two or three potential candidates available for each seat.

Dr Chan, who is a deputy chief minister, said the 19 seats were predominantly Chinese urban constituencies.

SUPP, the second dominant party in the Sarawak BN, retained only 11 of the 19 seats it contested in the last state election, in 2006, losing Pending, Batu Lintang, Padungan, Bukit Assek, Kota Sentosa, Meradong, Kidurong and Engkilili.

The names of the candidates would be made known "as we get closer to the elections", he told reporters after attending the Sarawak Tourism Board (STB) Aidilfitri 'open house' in Kuching.

Asked whether there was any time frame to finalise the list of candidates, Dr Chan said: "No. It depends on how soon (the state elections are)."

Dr Chan said the SUPP would try its best to deliver all the 19 seats in the next state elections.

"As far as we are concerned, the SUPP is revamping and reinventing in lots of ways. However, we are not going to tell the whole world what we are doing. We will show it later," he said.

On Saturday, the 74-year-old Dr Chan said he was likely to defend the Piasau state seat in Miri city he has held for six terms as, according to the party, he was still the best candidate to contest the seat.

In 2006, the Sarawak BN contested all the 71 seats, with Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), the backbone of the Sarawak BN standing in 35, SUPP 19, Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) nine and Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) eight.

The PBB won all 35 seats, SUPP 11, PRS eight and SPDP eight. The other seats were won by DAP (six), PKR (one), Snap (one) and an independent.

Dr Johnical Rayong, who stood on a Snap ticket in Engkilili, has become an independent.

- *Bernama*