

Star proposes merger with Snap
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State Reform Party (Star) has proposed a merger with the Sarawak National Party (Snap) to try and bring back Snap's old glory days when it played a major role in Sarawak politics.

Star and Snap are multi-racial parties but Dayak-based. Snap has a long history, producing Sarawak's first post-Independence chief minister Stephen Kalong Ningkan in 1963. Star's strength is mainly concentrated in the Bidayuh heartland of Bau, Lundu, Padawan and Serian on the outskirts of Kuching.

patau rubisStar president Dr Patau Rubis, once known as Snap's maverick senior vice-president before his membership in Snap was suspended indefinitely for alleged indiscipline in October 1995, told Malaysiakini today that he wrote to Snap president Edwin Dandang after the March 8 General Election proposing the merger.

"But I understand the matter was not touched on during the recent Snap's central executive committee meeting," he added with some disappointment.

He said he was not aware of the reason but believed that there could be other matters of greater priority to some Snap leaders and members.

Snap was served with a de-registration notice by the Registrar of Societies in 2000 and the matter has gone to the court with the party now appealing to the Federal Court in a final move to save the party from being de-registered.

Patau who still considers himself Snap at heart said Star is to him a 'temporary house' after his membership in Snap was suspended indefinitely without being sacked. He has often said publicly that Star is the new Snap.

Stood on Snap ticket

The two opposition parties have failed to win a single seat in the last few elections.

The only candidate who performed credibly although unable to beat the BN is Patau himself. His bastion is Tasik Biru which is part of Mas Gading parliamentary constituency where he did well to collect a sizeable vote against BN's Dr Tiki Lafe in three previous elections..

Snap leaders were not immediately available for comment.

Star was formed in 1996 after Patau was sacked by Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud as assistant minister and is considered 'a mosquito party' after all its candidates failed to get elected.

The Star president stood on a Snap ticket in the last two elections.