

Baru Bian faces new battle after party polls
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KUCHING - Failing to make into the veep post in the just concluded PKR polls, Sarawak Liaison Chief Baru Bian returned to his homeland only to face another 'battle' from his Dayak counterparts from the ruling coalition, Barisan Nasional (BN).

Sarcasm was thrown at Baru Bian for his defeat in the party race by two BN Dayak chiefs, namely the President of Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS), James Masing, and President of Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP), William Mawan Ikom.

Masing said that PKR is not serious about Sarawak and has urged Sarawakians, especially the rural people, not to take the party seriously adding that the party has nothing to offer.

Similarly, Mawan said the people will have to rely on the BN government as there is no Dayak from the Borneo states represented in Kuala Lumpur.

Taking the criticism in his stride, Baru Bian in a press conference on Wednesday, said it was almost as if Masing and Mawan were concerned about having no Dayak PKR representatives in KL.

He pointed out that despite BN's 47 years of rule in Sarawak, the Dayak leaders, one of them being the number two man in PBB, Alfred Jabu, had been unable to tackle the most important issue to the people which is the Native Customary Rights Land.

Taking a pot shot at Masing who made a statement earlier that State Common Law takes precedence over NCR, Baru Bian said PKR has all these years continued to emphasize on the importance of NCR land in Sarawak.

"We fought for the recognition of these rights and my statement still stand that we are going to form a Land Commissioner not only to investigate individual claims of NCR, but also the power to issue titles, individual titles, and gazette the area," he said.

Instead of relying on BN who has failed them for 47 years, Baru Bian urged for the Dayak's support to PKR which he said will fight for their land and rights.

Baru Bian also said that he agrees with DAP, a Pakatan Rakyat (PR) partner, who has expressed hope to see an automatic land lease renewal. "We are also concern about the Chinese and Malay land especially in the urban and coastal areas," he added.

"PKR is a multiracial party and the party does not emphasize or fight for only one race in the country. We fight for justice and fairness for all races and thus we are not racially polarized. That is why I choose this party. So I beg to differ what Mawan said" he stressed.

According to Baru Bian, a post mortem would be conducted soon to find out the party's weaknesses and strength.

Baru Bian said even if a Dayak is not elected, it does not mean that the Dayak community is not being taken care of. Whoever, he added, is elected will ensure that the welfare of all races including the Indian, Chinese, Orang Ulu, Dayak or Malay, will be taken care of.

He pointed out that a true leader will fight for all races and he is confident that the winning leaders will take their responsibilities equally.

PKR do not talk about majority or minority as justice is for all and the party refused to follow the system of BN, the PKR state chief added. - MM

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