

Azmin pledges 'full autonomy' for Sarawak
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BINTULU - Newly-elected PKR deputy president Azmin Ali has pledged full autonomy for Sarawak if Pakatan Rakyat win the 13th General Election.

In a rousing and fiery speech at a PKR pre-Christmas dinner here Sunday night, Azmin also challenged Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud to dissolve the state assembly immediately if Barisan Nasional was so confident of its showing in the coming state polls.

Azmin, who is on an East Malaysian tour, said PR will respect the Malaysia Agreement that was entered into at the formation of Malaysia in 1963 in reference to the 18 Point Agreement.

He was loudly cheered by the dinner crowd as he had tapped into the very issue that resonates with all Sarawakians, regardless of colour or creed.

"Sabah and Sarawak did not enter Malaysia. Sabah and Sarawak formed Malaysia together with the Federated States of Malaya," he added, to even more boisterous applause.

He also lambasted the Sarawak BN and its leadership for its corruption and cronyism.

More than 300 party members and supporters were present at the dinner, including DAP's Chiew Chin Sing, Sarawak PKR leader Baru Bian and several other party stalwarts.

"I, Azmin, will defend Sarawak and be an advocate of the peoples of Sarawak. "While I breathe, I hope!" he said, using the famous Sarawakian quote, which is derived from the Latin 'Dum spiro spero' that was the family motto of the Brooke Rajahs.

After the dinner, PKR leader Baru Bian, when met, said: "This is a very clear message and commitment from our national leaders and Pakatan Rakyat to the people of Sarawak.

"It is a resolute promise from PKR to right the wrong suffered by Sarawak due to the neglect and failure of the BN government and to restore and honour the agreement made by our forefathers 47 years ago."

"All this while, local Sarawak parties have been harping on the point that only they can deliver what Sarawak and Sarawakians need. Let me reiterate our stance: it is not whether a party is locally based that matters but what the party is fighting for.

"This is paramount and crucial. PKR, although a national party, is concerned with local issues," said Bian

Bian urged all Sarawakians to unite and support Pakatan Rakyat because "we are determined to redeem our rights that have been stolen from us for the last 47 years."

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