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Najib to address 5,000 SUPP delegates

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KUCHING: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak will attend the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) convention here on Jan 16.

The convention is aimed at reflecting the revitalised party's struggle for the people, its president Tan Sri Dr George Chan, said today.

Dr Chan, who is also deputy chief minister, said Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, would address about 5,000 delegates and party leaders at the convention, which is expected to touch on pertinent issues, including ed-

ucation and land.

"The tremendous response from the members is a new lease of life for the party. The prime minister's presence adds to the revival spirit to regain our position in Sarawak," he told a media conference after inspecting the convention venue at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (BCKK) here.

Najib will deliver the opening speech at the convention, the first such large-scale gathering for the party.

In refuting that the event was be-

ing held in preparation for the coming state election, he said it was aimed at motivating its members, especially its second-echelon leaders, dubbed SUPP's "new vanguards", in tandem with the Malaysia spirit.

He said it was important that SUPP used the multiracial approach in its policies even though it was mainly based in urban areas.

"Many people think SUPP is a Chinese party but we never say we are a Chinese party," he said, adding that 30 per cent of its 120,000 members

state-wide were Bumipiteras.

Dr Chan said SUPP could not afford to be viewed as a Chinese party as all its constituencies were mixed, while four of its 12 elected representatives were Bumiputeras.

The state's oldest political party fought for all Sarawakians, including raising the issue of native customary rights land with the government.

Najib is also expected to declare open the SJK Chung Hua Sg Tapang Hilir at MJC Batu Kawah, a new township here, on the same day. — Bernama

