

Wanita SUPP chief stages walkout
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KUCHING : A boycott threat and walkout by the Wanita head marked what was a highly-charged first day of the Sarawak United Peoples' Party's (SUPP) triennial delegates conference

SUPP is electing a new president after suffering heavy defeats in the Sarawak election in April. It pits Datuk Seri Wong Soon Koh — one of the two Chinese SUPP leaders who won in the state election — against parliamentarian Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui.

Wong and his team issued a statement about 5pm announcing their boycott plan, which they blamed on alleged "irregularities", and manipulations that would prevent a free and fair election".

"Many grassroots supporters are frustrated and if nothing is done to rectify the wrongdoings and irregularities, we will stage a big protest and demonstration during the TDC and resign en bloc."

The group members include the party's elected representatives — Datuk Richard Riot (Serian MP), Datuk Tiong Thai King (Lanang MP), Datuk Francis Hardin (Simanggang assemblyman), Datuk Lee Kim Shin (Senadin assemblyman), Dr Jerip Susil (Bengoh assemblyman) and Dr Johnichal Rayong (Engkilili).

Following this, outgoing SUPP president Tan Sri Dr George Chan and outgoing secretary-general Datuk Sim Kheng Hui and several senior leaders — aligned to Soon Koh's challenger Chin — gathered at the party headquarters. Dr Chan, when approached, refused to comment.

Earlier, about 3.30pm, chaos erupted at the SUPP Wanita assembly when its chief, Suzanne Lee, aligned to Wong, stormed out of its closed-door assembly.

Lee told reporters her credibility as the chairman of the women election committee was questioned by delegates from 19 branches.

They claimed that out of the 151 nomination forms received, Lee claimed only 116 were qualified.

The women's meeting came to a halt following the walkout.

Three top leaders Sim, treasurer Datuk David Teng and information chief Alfred Yap, were called in.

After about 200 delegates left, the remaining 442 delegates elected Tnay Li Ping as the new Wanita head.

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