

**SUPP leadership battle between federal and state ministers**  
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KUCHING, Oct 16 — Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Seri Peter Chin will square off with Sarawak Local Government and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Woon Soon Koh for the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) presidency in December.

Chin, the party organising secretary and Miri MP, made his announcement today. Woon, Bawang Assan assemblyman, had already made public his intention to run a week ago.

Chin (picture) told Bernama Online he was persuaded by 306 grassroots leaders from 33 party branches to run.

The federal minister said that it was inappropriate for him to shy away from responsibility.

The triennial delegate conference is expecting 600 representatives from 43 branches. That state's oldest party has to reenergise after failing to win over urban Chinese voters in April's state election. The Barisan Nasional component party lost 13 of the 19 state seats it contested.

Chin said that he had no team set up, when asked on speculations party treasurer Datuk David Teng will partner him.

Teng has said that he had no interest to run for the top port, and was leaving the verdict to the delegates.

Wong the Sibu branch chairman is seen to have pockets of support from northern, southern and central branches. He claims the support of Opar assemblyman Ranum Mina, Engkilili assemblyman Dr Johnical Rayong, Bengoh assemblyman Dr Jerip Susil and Sri Aman assemblyman Datuk Francis Harden Hollis.

While announcing his candidacy on October 9, Wong, the party deputy secretary-general, revealed yesterday that Assistant Minister of Social Development (Sports) and of Communications, Datuk Lee Kim Shin was his running mate.

Outgoing president Tan Sri Dr George Chan Hong Nam was defeated by DAP candidate Ling Sie Kiong for the Piasau seat in the last state election, setting the tone for his departure.

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