

Sarawak BN to tackle opposition efforts in rural seats
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Parti Rakyat Sarawak president Tan Sri Dr James Masing (pic) has called on his party members to train their guns on the 24 rural constituencies with Dayak majority in the next Sarawak state elections, the Borneo Post reported.

Saying that the rural battles will be tougher now that the opposition was working in the rural areas, it is up to the PRS to up their efforts to prevent Pakatan Rakyat from forming the next state government.

In the last election, Barisan Nasional (BN) won 55 seats while the opposition secured 16 seats.

The last state elections was held in April 2011, and as such, the term of the current State Legislative Assembly expires on June 2016, but the chief minister has the prerogative to dissolve it earlier.

Speaking just before the party's s triennial delegates' conference, which starts tomorrow, Masing expressed hope that party delegates would continue to concentrate on the rural folk in the years to come.

"The 24 Dayak seats... that's where the big battles will be. As far as PRS is concerned, we are in those battles.

"We have to deliver what we promised. More than that, we have to have a proper proposal for them (the rural voters). They will ask 'what is there for me', so we must tell them this is what we have for you in the next five years," Masing said in an interview with the Borneo Post.

PRS, is expected to contest in nine seats in the next state elections, including in Pelagus – the one seat it lost in 2011.

The party president added that while the Muslim-Bumiputera constituencies in the coastal areas were "fairly safe" seats for BN, the urban voters were leaning towards the opposition.

Masing, also spoke on the deregistration of Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS), where he was accused of having instigated the action by the ROS.

He dismissed the accusation as not logical and added: "I did not deregister PBDS. ROS (Registrar of Societies) deregistered it. How can they accuse me of doing it? I don't have the authority to deregister any party. I am the one who, at the time when ROS deregistered it, carried through the battle and objectives of PBDS through PRS."

According to the Borneo Post, Masing also rejected talks that he no longer fought for the Dayaks and denied accusations that he was no longer vocal as he used to be when PBDS was part of the opposition.

Instead, he said he was now working towards evolution instead of revolution.

"I still fight for the Dayaks, but within the ambit of Barisan Nasional. You cannot fight outside BN. I haven't lost my objective to improve the livelihood of the Dayaks. That I haven't changed.

"The change I may have is being less vocal as (when we were) against the BN."

Masing added that given his experience in Sarawak politics, he had come to realise that it was impossible to change the objectives of the government from the outside, the report stated. - September 19, 2013.

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