

Tiong King Sing Ready To Helm SPDP If Members Want Him To Do So
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SARIKEI, July 12(Bernama) -- Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party(SPDP) acting president Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing is prepared to take over its helm if members want him to do so.

"I am not ambitious.I prefer more to serve the people.

"But if members want me to be their leader, I cannot say no,"he told reporters after attending a "Gawai Ngiling Bidai"(gathering to mark the closing of the Gawai Dayak Festival) at Rh. Sumbang, Sungai Rusa in here Saturday.

Julau member of parliament (MP) Datuk Joseph Salang, who is also chairman of the 1Malaysia Sarawak Advisory Council and Mas Gading MP Anthony Nogeh were among those present.

Tiong, a former deputy president of SPDP, is now its acting president after its former leader Tan Sri William Mawan left it to join another party, Parti Tenaga Rakyat Sarawak(Teras) about two months ago due to an internal leadership crisis.

Tiong said he did not consider Teras as a threat to SPDP because not that many members had joined Mawan, who also is the state Minister of Social Development and Urbanisation, in deserting it.

"They had purposely cooked up the numbers to impress the Barisan Nasional leadership.

"Although Mawan exited the party, the other four SPDP state representatives, for instance, had left it much much earlier,"he said.

Tiong added that SPDP was now in the process of reorganising and restrengthening itself.

"Our Supreme Council will hold a meeting in Bintulu tomorrow on the new date for our triennial general assembly (TGA) where we will elect our new leadership.

"We had initially fixed this for October 4 this year but our Muslim members, although a minority, want us to consider another date as the following day will be the Hari Raya Korban,"he said.

"We want to leave behind the former leaders mentality of insincerity and back stabbing.

"We must move forward.We must continue to work in all sincerity, unity, harmony and in one Barisan Nasional spirit with other component parties," he added.

Tiong, meanwhile, lashed out at efforts by former party leaders to force rural folks to join Teras by threatening not to give them government development grants if they refused.

When they handed over such grants, they also handed out Teras membership forms, he claimed.

He said such leaders were not qualified to be Barisan Nasional leaders as they used threats and lies on the people instead of acting on the principle of democracy.

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