

Wong, Three Others Leave TERAS To Form UPP
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KUCHING, July 17 (Bernama) -- Sarawak's political scenario experienced another twist Thursday as four elected representatives who left the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), a state Barisan Nasional (BN) component party, in May to join Parti Tenaga Rakyat Sarawak (TERAS) is now forming a new party, the United People's Party (UPP).

Announcing the development, one of the elected representatives, Datuk Seri Wong Soon Koh, who is Bawang Assan assemblyman, said the decision to form UPP, which was registered on Monday (July 14), was made as a better way for them to move forward.

"We have come to the conclusion that it would be better for the former YBs (Yang Berhormat or elected representatives) of SUPP and SPDP (Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party) to work in close partnership but to move forward on separate platforms," he said at a press conference, in Kuching.

Three other elected representatives who joined Wong in UPP were Datuk Dr Jerip Susil, who is the assemblyman for Bengoh, Ranum Mina (Opar) and Dr Johnical Rayong Ngipa (Engkilili).

Also present at the press conference were former SPDP president Tan Sri William Mawan Ikom and three other ex-SPDP elected representatives in Datuk Sylvester Entri Muran, Paulus Palu Gumbang and Rosey Yunus who announced joining TERAS on May 15.

Wong said in spite of parting company, they would continue to work together with UPP placing greater emphasis on the Chinese community while TERAS would focus on the Dayak community.

He said UPP would try to revive the old spirit of SUPP, which he claimed no longer existed.

Meanwhile, Mawan said the formation of UPP and its collaboration with TERAS would put both parties in a better position to overcome the challenges, particularly from those who were against their decision to join BN.

"Much as we want to go on a separate command and entity, there is still a convergence of thoughts between us," he said.

He described TERAS' partnership with UPP as "a group with two fronts and many defence lines".

While acknowledging that it would take some time for some of their supporters to digest the move, Mawan said: "We know people like a straight line, but we do not have to draw a

straight line."

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