

SPDP Will Not Give Up Its Eight Seats - Tiong
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By Robert Kenneth

BAU, July 27 (Bernama) -- Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) interim president Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing has reassured party members that SPDP will not give up any of the eight seats allocated to the party, including Tasik Biru.

He said several people had asked him whether it was true Tasik Biru would be given up to Parti Tenaga Rakyat Sarawak (Teras).

"That is not true as Tasik Biru remains ours. I will not give away any seat to the others. I will defend what is rightfully, ours," said Tiong during a unity dinner at the Civic Centre here last night.

He said the party had identified potential candidates to challenge the incumbent state assemblyman in Tasik Biru, Datuk Peter Nansian Nguse in the next state election.

"SPDP will go all out to defend the Tasik Biru seat for Barisan Nasional (BN) in the coming state election and we have identified three to four potential candidates for the seat," he said, adding that they had already doing their groundwork in the constituency.

Peter Nansian is a four-term assemblyman from the BN-friendly Teras, and was formerly from SPDP and an assistant minister in the state cabinet.

Earlier, when speaking to reporters prior to the dinner, Tiong said he was aware of the possibility of a multi-cornered fight for Tasik Biru but was confident SPDP could win and deliver the seat for BN.

He said his confidence stemmed from Anthony Nogeh Gumbek's victory in last year's general election when he defeated a very strong opponent in former three-term member of parliament (MP) Datuk Dr Tiki Lafe, also formerly of SPDP and linked to some Teras leaders.

Meanwhile, Nogeh in his speech said the potential candidates identified for Tasik Biru were highly-educated and proven their capability through years of experience in their respective fields.

Rubbishing rumours of a mass exodus from SPDP to Teras, he said that for Tasik Biru, "we received 800 new membership applications and this shows SPDP is still relevant in its struggles.

Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) Tasik Biru chairman Chong Bui Ling echoed what Tiong and Nogeh said, stating that the SPDP candidate could win if all BN components

worked together like what they did in Mas Gading last year.

The dinner night saw representatives from other BN components, including Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) Tasik Biru chairman John Nyigor and councillor Edmund Patrick representing Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS).

Also present were SPDP secretary general Datuk Nelson Balang Rining, vice-president Rayan Narong, youth chief Robert Ayu and several supreme council members.

Prior to the dinner, Tiong, who is also the Prime Minister s Special Envoy to East Asia, launched the new SPDP Tasik Biru service centre located in Jalan Market here.

The setting up of the office was initiated by party member William Jinep.

SPDP also has another office in Bau, namely the Mas Gading parliamentary service centre in Jalan Tasik Biru.

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