

## **Pairin To Step Down As PBS President**

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PENAMPANG, Nov 18 (Bernama) -- Parti Bersatu Sabah founder Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan today delivered his final keynote address at the 32nd PBS Annual Delegates' Conference, after leading the party since 1985.

At the opening ceremony of the event at the KDCA Hongkod Hall here, the 77-year-old leader described the keynote as his last as party president.

After 32 years of leading the multi-racial and second largest party in Sabah, Pairin said the party now seemed more mature, as it had gone through many challenges, obstacles, as well as bitter and sweet experiences during the period.

"I believe that with the continuous support, loyalty, and hard work of party members and supporters at all levels, this party will continue to excel and flourish to look after the rights of Sabahans.

"We all need to always practise tolerance, cooperation and effective communication to ensure that PBS continues to remain relevant to the people.

"It is my desire as party president that all our peers and party members continue to share PBS's mission, vision and struggle so that this party can continue to serve the people of Sabah, irrespective of race and religion," he said.

The ceremony was officiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman.

Also present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Musa Aman, who is also Sabah BN chairman, and PBS deputy president Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili, who is also Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister.

Pairin said all PBS members must work hard to strengthen the party's position at the grassroots level ahead of the 14th General Election.

He also stated his confidence that Ongkili would continue the legacy and bring new leadership to the party.

He said PBS had never wavered from its original struggle, however, the party should adopt new approaches and strategies in facing the current changes in the political and economic climate.

"Give your full support and cooperation to launch this leadership transition. I believe that as long as we are sincere in our mission, vision and party struggle, we will remain in the hearts of the people of Sabah and Malaysia," he said.

In the meantime, PBS also pledged to work hard to win all the seats allocated to the party in the coming general election and give unwavering support to the leadership of the prime minister.

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