

SUPP President Squashes Rumour Riot Will Be Dropped

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KUCHING, Feb 27 (Bernama) -- Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) president Datuk Dr Sim Kui Hian squashed rumours that the party's deputy president Datuk Seri Richard Riot Jaem will be dropped in the 14th general election (GE14).

"The election is going to be held very soon and we have no time to drop anyone...we have to work together to be strong to face the election.

"We want not just SUPP to become strong but we also should make Sarawak strong politically," Dr Sim, who is also Sarawak Local Government and Housing Minister, told Bernama.

Riot, 66, who is Human Resources Minister and a Member of Parliament for Serian is rumoured to be dropped in GE14.

The sixth term MP is currently the sole SUPP elected representative in Parliament, having retained the rural Dayak seat of Serian, the only seat won by SUPP out of seven contested in GE13, besides being the party's first non Chinese deputy president.

Dr Sim said the Chinese support towards SUPP) was now more solid and that could help the state Barisan Nasional (BN) party to redeem their poor performance in GE13.

He was optimistic the fortunes of the Sarawak's oldest party would change this time around (at the GE14).

Asked to comment on SUPP's splinter group, the United People's Party (UPP)'s action to stake its claim on the same seven parliamentary seats, he said these were SUPP's traditional seats and no other party should claim them.

Apart from Serian, the remaining six seats contested by SUPP in GE13 were Bandar Kuching, Stampin, Sibuluan, Lanang, Sarikei which went to DAP and Bandar Miri to PKR - which are Chinese-majority urban seats.

"The chief minister has said it during the Chinese New Year luncheon organised by SUPP in Sibuluan recently that he wants SUPP to wrest back Lanang and Sibuluan seats which clearly showed that the chief minister himself wants SUPP to contest in these seats," he said.

Thus, he said anyone who wishes to contest in all these seven seats using BN symbol must be SUPP candidates.

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