

S'wak new party no match for GPS, says analyst

KUCHING: A political analyst says Parti Sarawak Bersatu (PSB) would not make any significant impact in the coming state elections next year, even with some former state PKR members joining the party recently.

Speaking to FMT, Jayum Jawan of Universiti Putra Malaysia said PSB was no match for Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS).

PSB is a local independent party with no affiliation to other political parties in Sarawak while GPS is a coalition of Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), Party Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) and the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP). The coalition forms the state government.

Jawan said that PSB had stated it intends to contest all seats in Sarawak, but the party would not make any impact in Malay and Melanau areas. "It may make some ripples in Chinese areas; it may make waves in Dayak areas but that is all," he told FMT.

He described PSB as a "party of rejects", saying it was led by individuals who had left their original parties and merely wanted to maintain their relevance.

"They are jumping here and there looking for political platforms and do not represent principles but themselves," he said. "For example, did Selangau MP Baru Bian consult the voters in his constituency before joining PSB or was the move purely to keep his personal political ambition alive?"

Baru, the former Sarawak PKR chief, joined PSB on Saturday with Batu Lintang assemblyman See Chee How and several other Sarawak PKR members. He said he and his supporters shared PSB's "aspirations for a New Sarawak".

Baru, a former works minister, is aligned to ex-PKR deputy president Mohamed Azmin Ali who quit PKR during the political crisis in February that saw the collapse of the Pakatan Harapan government.

He said he left PKR because its leaders had failed to pursue the party's original vision. However, Jawan said Baru's explanation was a typical one used by a "political frog".

Another analyst, Awang Azman Awang Pawi of Universiti Malaya, said PSB had many experienced leaders, including Baru and See, with strong financial resources, the party could be a threat to GPS' coalition partners such as PRS, PDP and SUPP in the next state elections.

However, he said PSB was "fragile". He warned that its members could jump ship to join other parties at any time if there was any disagreement among them or for personal political interests.

"PSB is very much like a temporary shelter for "political refugees" before the next state and general elections," he added. - FMT