

## State DAP disappointed with top court's verdict

**KUCHING:** The Federal Court's decision to allow an appeal by the Sarawak assembly to disqualify DAP's Dr Ting Tiong Choon as Pujut assemblyman has disappointed the state party leadership.

Sarawak DAP chairman Chong Chieng Jen yesterday said the panel of nine judges delivered three written judgments, of which two from the chief justice and chief judge of Sabah and Sarawak decided in favour of Dr Ting.

However, the remaining written judgment was agreed upon by the six other judges.

"In such an important case, six Federal Court judges chose not to write their separate opinions but to tag along with the judgment of one of their colleagues.

"We (Sarawak DAP) feel sad about the majority decision of the Federal Court, which leaves it (the matter) to the state assembly to do whatever it wants, with unfettered and unlimited power.

"This basically destroys the fundamental doctrine of separa-

tion of powers," Chong said.

The Federal Court yesterday overturned the Court of Appeal's 2018 ruling that the state assembly's move to disqualify Dr Ting over his past Malaysian-Australian dual citizenship was unlawful.

Dr Ting had acquired Australian citizenship in 2010, but renounced it in April 2016 just before he won the Pujut seat in the state election on May 7, 2016.

"The Sarawak assembly has taken away a rightfully elected representative of the people of Pujut, thereby depriving the people of Pujut their voice.

"Although the majority (of) judgment(s) by the Federal Court has decided not to interfere with the decision of the state assembly, that does not give justification to the state assembly's resolution to disqualify Dr Ting," Chong said.

He added that despite the disqualification, Dr Ting would continue operating the DAP service centre in Pujut.



Chong Chieng Jen