

On M'sia Day, BN and Pakatan jostle for East M'sia
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Amidst a heavy downpour, Pakatan Rakyat today launched its seven-point pledge to the voters of Sabah and Sarawak, promising to honour the Malaysia Agreement of 1963 and improving their quality of life.

The pledge was signed by PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang and DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang at the Chong Ling Park, Kuching this evening.

Dubbed the Kuching Declaration, the seven-point declaration marked Pakatan's promise should it take hold of Putrajaya to undertake the following:

To restore autonomy within Sarawak and Sabah and making the two states equal partners.

To increase national integration between Sarawak, Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia through a fair power-sharing agreement.

To set up a Royal Commission to resolve problems of citizenship and illegal immigration in Sarawak and Sabah.

To restore native customary rights over land and establishing a land commission.

To ensure appointment of Sarawakians and Sabahans as heads of government departments at the state and federal level, within the state.

To increase oil royalties from 5 percent to 20 percent.

To ensure that infrastructural development in Sarawak and Sabah be up to par with Peninsular Malaysia

The event kicked off with a speech by Sarawak PKR chief Baru Bian who told the 1,000 hundred strong crowd - many huddling under umbrellas - that he has a dream that his state would one day be free of oppression.

This was followed by speeches from Abdul Hadi, Lim and Anwar who derided BN for ignoring Sabah and Sarawak to the point that the two states were the poorest in Malaysia.

Anwar said that much of populace in the two states languished in poverty while state officials are plundering the state's resources and stealing native customary rights land.

Mammoth event

In Bintulu, some 600km east of Kuching, some 15,000 people are expected to converge at the old airport for the national level Malaysia Day event.

Bt Jalil Merdeka NajibPrime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, his deputy Muhyiddin Yassin, Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud and Information, Communications and Culture Minister Rais Yatim are scheduled to attend the mammoth event.

Five outstanding Malaysians would be presented with an award during the ceremony while another award will be handed to the organisers of the Twitter Merdeka event.

This is the third year in which Malaysia Day is recognised as a national event and a public holiday.

Prior to 2008, Pakatan had been actively promising to make Malaysia Day a public holiday and fulfil the 20-point Malaysia Agreement.

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