

**S'wak DAP quits Pakatan, with immediate effect**  
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Sarawak DAP has decided to pull out of the Pakatan Rakyat coalition with immediate effect over the hudud bill imbroglio.

This was decided after a two-hour Sarawak DAP leadership meeting in Kuching today.

Sarawak DAP chief Chong Chien Jen said that PAS' decision to pursue a theocratic state was an affront to Pakatan Rakyat's common policy framework and thus a working relationship with PAS is no longer tenable.

He added that PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's plan to table a private member's bill to amend laws necessary to pave way for hudud punishment was against the Federal Constitution and the spirit of the Malaysia Agreement.

Chong said when the Federation of Malaysia was formed in 1963, the Malaysia Agreement had inferred that the new country would be secular in nature.

He also urged PKR to leave Pakatan to form a new opposition coalition.

**An independent decision?**

Meanwhile, Sarawak DAP treasurer Violet Yong told Malaysiakini that the decision to leave Sarawak Pakatan was an independent one.

"Sarawak DAP operates in a different way from DAP in other states. We have a certain amount of autonomy.

"We don't need green light from the national leadership. But we have notified them," she said.

Yesterday, Sabah DAP had proposed a new coalition called "Pakatan Rakyat Baru" in the state, which excludes PAS.

When contacted for his response, DAP deputy secretary-general Ngeh Khoo Ham (left) said the party's central executive committee (CEC) has yet to be officially informed on the Sarawak DAP decision.

"But generally, because of the Malaysia Agreement and local sentiments against 'West Malaysia' parties, Sarawak and Sabah DAP are given a certain degree of autonomy, but they are still subject to the CEC," he said.

Ngeh said he believed Sarawak and Sabah DAP are reacting to the fact that PAS' decision to pursue its theocratic state agenda went against the spirit of the Pakatan coalition.

He said that when Pakatan was formed, the three components had agreed to "95 percent" of issues, but PAS seemed to be focussing on the other five percent.

"Even in the Middle East, the Shia and the Sunni are fighting over differences. I hope Pakatan, especially PAS, learns from this and focuses on the bigger picture: our common ground, the 95 percent," he said.

### **An 'unfortunate' turn of events**

In a related development, Sarawak PKR said it was "unfortunate" that its DAP counterpart is no longer with Pakatan.

Sarawak PKR vice-chairperson See Chee How said it was against the implementation of hudud in Malaysia, but he did not state how this would affect the party's ties with PAS.

"We emphasise that we are willing to cooperate with any party with the main aim of providing a credible alternative to BN, both at the federal and state level," he said.

See, who is the Batu Lintang state assemblyperson, added that Sarawak PKR is also seeking to pass a motion at the forthcoming state legislative assembly sitting to safeguard Sarawak from the implementation of hudud.

"This is to protect the sanctity of our Federal Constitution, the Constitution of the state of Sarawak, the Malaysia Agreement and the rights and interests of all Sarawakians," he said.