

## **PAS joins hands with Ikatan to form third force**

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**Anne Muhammad**

PAS today announced that it will join hands with Parti Ikatan Bangsa Malaysia (Ikatan) to form a new opposition bloc, touted as the third force.

This was disclosed during a press conference at the PAS headquarters attended by Ikatan president and former tourism minister Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir as well as PAS leaders such as president Abdul Hadi Awang, secretary-general Takiyuddin Hassan, vice-president Idris Ahmad and election director Mustafa Ali.

Previously, Takiyuddin revealed that the Islamic party will collaborate with a multiracial entity to provide Malaysians with a third alternative.

Ikatan was formed in 2012, but was only registered in 2015 after Kadir, a former Umno supreme council member, dragged the Registrar of Societies (ROS) to court.

The party aims to champion the ideas of the nation's first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman.

Earlier, PAS' plan to organise a press conference to announce the new coalition had to be put on hold when electrical supply to the party headquarters was interrupted for about 10 minutes.

The cramped media centre at the building which could not accommodate the large number of reporters present, forced the press conference to be relocated to a nearby hotel.

Prior to that, Takiyuddin had announced the formation of the third force political bloc which hopes to stand toe-to-toe with Harapan in the upcoming general election.

### **Inter-party squabbles**

PAS, along with PKR and DAP, formed the Pakatan Rakyat opposition pact in the run up to GE13, though their political cooperation eventually fizzled out due to inter-party squabbles.

One main issue was the internal crisis within PAS itself when the conservatives in the party purged the progressives, resulting in a split as disgruntled former leaders, removed from their posts in the Islamic party, left to form Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah).

Amanah later formed an opposition pact with PAS' former partners PKR and DAP resulting in Pakatan Harapan.

The new third force political alignment comes in the wake of PAS being left out of the

re-branded opposition coalition.

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