

Dr M urges one-to-one fights to beat BN at by-elections
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Former premier and ex-Umno veteran Dr Mahathir Mohamad has urged the opposition to stand as one to defeat BN at the upcoming twin by-elections in Selangor and Perak.

“This fasting month we will face two by-elections, and I hope we all can defeat BN this time.

“It doesn’t matter who leads the fight, we must have only one party to fight BN because we know if there are two or three (opposition) candidates like what had happened in Sarawak, the votes will be split and BN will win.

“If we have only one to one fights we are sure to defeat BN by giving all our collective votes to the candidate contesting against BN,” Mahathir said at a Save Malaysia gathering at Stadium Malawati, Shah Alam last night.

The Sarawak election on May 7 was a disaster for the opposition coalition Pakatan Harapan as well as PAS, who fought one another for the seats and ended up handing a landslide victory to BN.

The Election Commission (EC) has fixed June 18 for the Sungai Besar and Kuala Kangsar [by-elections](#).

The two seats became [vacant](#) after Plantation Industries and Commodities Deputy Minister Noriah Kasnon and Wan Muhammad Khairil Anuar Wan Ahmad died in a helicopter crash on May 5 in Sarawak, while campaigning at the state polls.

‘Harapan and PAS should unite’

The gathering last night held together with Pakatan Harapan saw a poorer turnout of roughly 300 as compared to previous events, possibly due to the FA Cup finals last night.

Commenting on PAS’ determination to run in both seats, Mahathir said the opposition should unite and not let seat grabbing hand a win to BN.

He said PAS not being part of Harapan should not stop the two uniting against the ruling coalition.

“We don’t care who the candidate is, even if it’s from PAS and PAS is not with us, the prime objective however is to defeat BN to show Najib the rakyat no longer supports him.

“This is why we have to work hard to defeat BN in these by-elections,” he said.

“(BN’s loss) would prove that the win in Sarawak wasn’t Najib’s win, although so much money was thrown there,” he said.

He added Sarawakians were concerned about the well-being of the state during the elections, not showing support for the prime minister.

Dr M’s change of heart

Meanwhile, at the event PKR deputy president Azmin Ali welcomed the long-running former premier’s change of heart.

“This is a new direction revealed by Mahathir, and this has inspired our spirit to learn from our mistakes in Sarawak.

“All parties must therefore return to the negotiating table to ensure the aspirations of the rakyat can be fulfilled,” said the Selangor menteri besar.

He said Harapan has yet to decide on which party will contest in the two seats.

“What is important is the principle that we uphold and which Mahathir has also shown support for tonight, that the by-elections should be a one to one contest and we must take down BN in Sungai Besar and Kuala Kangsar.”