

Azmin and allies announce joining Bersatu

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International Trade and Industry Minister Azmin Ali today led his former PKR allies to join Bersatu, formalising their status as a part of the Perikatan Nasional coalition.

"With the utmost sincerity, on this auspicious evening, myself and my team, we announce that we are joining Bersatu and supporting the leadership of Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.

"Now is the time to Bersatu (unite). Bersatu for the nation. Bersatu for Malaysia," said Azmin in a speech at the National Congress 2020 witnessed by Muhyiddin and top Bersatu leaders.

Azmin said his supporters as a whole had longed for a credible leadership and a political vessel capable of representing the desires of all Malaysians.

He said there were heavy deliberations while in search of a credible leader and a decision had to be made in order to save the nation.

"[...] after due consideration, finally me and my friends in the grassroots sighted this figure from Pagoh, someone big-hearted, hard-working and proven as a superior leader," he said referring to Muhyiddin.

The congress themed "Bersatu untuk Negara" (Unite for the Nation) was hosted as a gathering of NGOs - Penggerak Komuniti Negara, Pemuda Negara, Wanita Muda Negara and Nation of Women (NOW) - all affiliated to former PKR leaders.

Some 2,500 people gathered at the Malaysian International Trade and Exhibition Centre (MITEC) in Kuala Lumpur to witness the announcement, several months after Azmin's departure from PKR, along with 10 other MPs who backed the formation of Muhyiddin's administration.

The Sheraton Move in February also saw the downfall of then Pakatan Harapan's government and a split within PKR, as the party subsequently rid its ranks of members and leaders aligned to Azmin as then deputy president.

In his speech, Azmin alluded to struggles faced during his and his allies' time in PKR which they overcame through a series of "strategic" decisions and

manoeuvres.

"However, no matter how great our strategy or our team, its success and future victories demands for us to have a charismatic, firm and gracious commander-in-chief.

"I am proud and grateful because today we are given the honour of standing alongside our commander-in-chief Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, prime minister of Malaysia," he said.

The entry of Azmin and his compatriots increases the number of MPs in Bersatu to 31. The party trails behind DAP, Umno and PKR as the fourth-largest party in the Dewan Rakyat.

Aside from top Bersatu leaders, also present today were PAS secretary-general Takiyuddin Hassan, GPS secretary-general Alexander Nanta Linggi and other PN leaders.

There were no Umno leaders in attendance but Azmin at a press conference later clarified that Umno secretary-general Annuar Musa had apologised on behalf of their party leaders for being unable to attend.

He also said that the leaders gathered today would be campaigning for BN's candidate in the Slim by-election as well as the upcoming Sabah state polls.

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