

**Separate polls: 'We'll give notice if they give notice'**  
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Pakatan Rakyat governments should only give prior notice for state elections if the federal government is prepared to do the same, PKR elections chief Fuziah Salleh said today.

"Why should we do it? We should (give notice) only if BN is going to do so when calling for a general election. Then only will it be a level playing field," she said.

The prerogative to call for snap elections is often the trump card of a ruling government and it would be unwise for Pakatan to not use this to their advantage, she said.

"Maybe we can (give prior notice) when we are the federal government, but not now," she said when contacted.

pkfuziah.salleh@pc.on.islamic.family.law.240106 selectiveSome Pakatan leaders are proposing Pakatan-led states to hold separate state polls if the federal government calls a general election.

Fuziah (right) was commenting on media reports which claimed that the Selangor Pakatan Rakyat government would give six-month notice before calling for state elections.

The report quoted Selangor PAS information chief Roslan Shahrir Mohd Shahrir.

When contacted by Malaysiakini, Roslan said he had given the six-month time frame only as example.

He claimed that a Selangor Pakatan Rakyat council did come to a consensus to consider giving notice in the interest of fair elections.

PKR vice-president and Selangor PKR chief Azmin Ali said the matter was never raised for discussion among the pact's leaders.

"It was never discussed. No decision to that extent. They also can't decide at state level as the matter must be brought for discussion at the national level.

"This is a policy matter, involving three parties. The chairman of the state PR (Pakatan Rakyat) will bring it to the national committee first. So far, the issue has never been discussed," he said when contacted.

Pros and cons to be studied

DAP Selangor chairperson Ean Yong said Pakatan Selangor was still discussing whether to call for Selangor elections when parliament was dissolved.

This is despite 'misleading' media reports suggesting otherwise, he said.

ean.yong.hian.wah.interview.110408.interview"The council came to a consensus that we would like to serve out our whole term as state government.

"But this is not conclusive as we will have review it and factor in other circumstances when parliament is actually dissolved," said Yong (left).

In any case, he added, such a resolution could only be made by Pakatan's national leadership council and that Selangor Pakatan chief Khalid Ibrahim would raise the matter.

Yong said holding separate state elections has its pros and cons which required further consideration.

One significant drawback was the fact that BN would be able to channel more resources in trying to win state seats, he said.

EC in the spotlight

All three nonetheless agree that holding separate elections will allow them to better allocate their limited resources.

Fuziah also felt that not holding state elections at the same time of parliament dissolution will put the Election Commission (EC) under the spotlight.

"The EC appears to be a component of BN so if we have separate elections, they will be in the spotlight and will not be able to use NONETipu helah (deceptive tactics) which could be covered up if everything is happening at the same time," she said.

Separate elections are also a common occurrence worldwide, she said, with countries like Indonesia and the US having different levels of elections throughout a government's term.

"That way, people can have a better understanding of the workings of democracy. We want the rakyat to see that it is not just the federal government that has the power to call for elections," she said.

The issue of state assembly dissolutions was raised following speculation of snap general polls by BN.

Malaysia has conventionally held state elections in conjunction with general elections, with the exception of Sarawak.

The EC has cautioned that while it is possible to hold separate elections, they pose logistical problems and will 'inconvenience voters'.

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