

**PAS denies joining Machap race**  
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PAS supporters club chairperson Hu Pang Chao claimed rumours to rope in an ethnic Chinese doctor by PAS Malacca to contest in the Machap by-election were started by the ruling Barisan Nasional to cause misunderstanding among opposition parties.

"These are what they are - just rumours! PAS will never stab people in the back," said Hu, a former local government councillor in PAS-ruled Kelantan

Hu said PAS had never committed such an act since its inception and would be straightforward in dealing with other opposition groups.

"PAS will not resort to such an action as it is against Islamic teachings. To me, those trying to spread such news are from the BN to split the opposition parties. BN will use all sorts of tactics," he added.

"All the while, PAS has never contested in Machap. There is no point fielding a candidate there and waste money for no reason. PAS is mainly concentrating on the general election".

**DAP: It's their prerogative**

Yesterday, a party source informed malaysiakini that PAS Malacca intends to field an independent candidate to spoil DAP's performance in the by-election.

This was because PAS members in the state were unhappy with DAP over several outstanding issues, chiefly the reluctance of DAP to hold talks with PAS.

Meanwhile, Malacca PAS chief Abdul Ghani Abdul Rahman confirmed that PAS members in the state had also been instructed not to assist DAP in their campaign.

In response, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said PAS Malacca's decision was 'their prerogative'. He added that the party was in cooperation with Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) for the Machap by-election.

Despite repeated queries, Lim declined to comment on whether there was cooperation with PAS for the by-election.

"Our focus is giving BN the maximum fight alongside PKR," said Lim when contacted today.

**Former coalition mates**

PKR information chief Tian Chua also dismissed the possibility of PAS Malacca fielding an independent candidate.

"It's not true. I think they won't do such a thing," Chua said when contacted.

The Chinese-dominated DAP was once a member of Barisan Alternatif, an opposition

coalition which included PAS and PKR.

After crossing swords with PAS over the latter's intention to establish an Islamic state, DAP withdrew from the coalition in 2001.

Machap is a predominantly Chinese constituency and traditional MCA stronghold. While 45.7 percent of the population are Chinese, it has a sizeable 39.5 percent Malay electorate.

The seat fell vacant following the death of incumbent Poh Ah Tiam, 55, on March 15. So far both DAP and MCA have said they will field candidates for the by-election.

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