

**MoCS suggests common symbol for Pakatan in Sarawak polls**  
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KUCHING – Pakatan Rakyat in Sarawak has been urged to come up with a common symbol to challenge the ‘dacing’ of the Barisan Nasional in the coming Sarawak election.

Movement For Change, Sarawak (MoCS) leader Francis Paul Siah felt this was important to reflect the unity of purpose of the opposition coalition as it prepares its onslaught on the BN.

“I understand that Pakatan has agreed on a common manifesto but a common symbol is just as important to show the people of Sarawak that the opposition is truly united,” he said at the MoCS New Year gathering here Saturday night.

“This has been an elusive issue among the parties in Pakatan for a long time and the coalition in Sarawak should take a giant leap forward by unanimously agreeing to use one symbol.

“While it is too late to register a common Pakatan symbol in time for the state polls, the group can agree to use one of their party symbols for now. They can even come to a consensus to rotate their respective party symbols.

“For example, if all the Pakatan candidates use the PKR symbol for the coming state election, then they can all contest under the DAP symbol in the next general election,” he said.

Siah reasoned that as the people of Sarawak were looking up to Pakatan parties to evoke a change in government, the opposition coalition should and must put up a united front.

“When you have already agree to work together, why is it so difficult to agree to use one common symbol? It’s also easier for the voters to recognize one symbol for all Pakatan candidates,” he said.

The MoCS leader was addressing a gathering where senior PKR leaders in Sarawak, including Nicholas Bawin and Jimmy Donald, were present.

Siah said that the common symbol was first mooted in the 1999 parliamentary by the then Sarawak Alternative Front but some quarters were over-protective of their party symbol.

“It was as if that their party insignia was the best and most well known among voters. In the 1999 election, only one of the opposition candidates made it to Parliament. The rest failed miserably”, he lamented.

Siah was secretary-general of the State Reform Party at that time and he had expressed great disappointment then that the Alternative Front did not reach a consensus on a common symbol.

“I think it’s time for Pakatan in Sarawak that they have something ‘extraordinary’ to offer in the state which is different from its operations in West Malaysia. Sarawak can take the lead

here.

"Having a common manifesto is easy. The opposition coalition had done that in previous elections. But they never seem to be able to discard the "this is my party symbol" mentality. And this has proven to be one of the factors in their own downfall in many Sarawak elections.

"It's time to act and show to the voters of Sarawak that the opposition forces in the state are truly united under one platform and one symbol, instead of an array of symbols which can confuse the people," the MoCS chief reasoned.

Siah added that if BN component parties can discard their party symbols and contest under the common 'dacing' symbol, there was no reason why Pakatan parties (some of which are not relatively new) could not do so.

On the coming state election, Siah expected it to be called in April. The current term of the State Government ends in July.

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