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PAKATAN WON'T WORK WITH PAS

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We are preparing for 3-way fights, says Dr M

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PAKATAN Harapan has shut the door on cooperation with Pas in the next general election.

Its chairman, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said Pakatan would not work with Pas, including at the state level.

"Pakatan will not cooperate with Pas in the 14th General Election," he said at the coalition's three-hour presidential council meeting on Monday.

The coalition is made up of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), PKR, DAP and Parti Amanah Negara (PAN).

Top leaders present included PKR president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, PPBM president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, his deputy, Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, and PAN president Mohamad Sabu.

The former prime minister said: "Pakatan is preparing a



(From left): Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Khalid Samad and Dr Azman Ismail.

strategy for the possibility of three-cornered contests in the election."

This came after Selangor Menteri Besar and PKR deputy president Datuk Seri Azmin Ali reportedly said PKR needed to renegotiate with Pas to avoid three-way fights, especially in the state.

However, no Pakatan leaders present on Monday would comment on whether they had discussed the situation with Pas in Selangor.

They also refused to comment on PKR vice-president Rafizi Ramli's call for a special congress to resolve the matter among the opposition parties.

PAN deputy president Salahuddin Ayub said a "firm decision" was reached by the Pakatan allies to stop working with Pas.

In **Shah Alam**, PAN information director Khalid Samad said Pakatan leaders had agreed to stop "wooing" Pas at the meeting.

He said the coalition intended to focus on strengthening its machinery to prepare for three-cornered fights.

"All Pakatan allies decided last night (Monday) that it was time for us to move forward and make a clear-cut stand on Pas.

"Pas has made it clear on its stand to contest all constituencies, so we need to be clear to the

people, too.

"This will let people know that Pakatan has nothing to do with Pas, and that Pas is not with Pakatan."

Khalid, who is also Shah Alam member of parliament, said Pakatan would not waste time talking with Pas any more.

"The issue of *pecah undi* (splitting of votes) is something that is inevitable.

"PKR tried, so did PPBM, but we were not successful."

PAN's Youth wing welcomed Pakatan's decision to completely cut ties with Pas.

PAN Youth chief Mohd Sany Hamzan said the electorate wanted a strong opposition to

contest against Barisan Nasional in the elections.

"Pas' arrogance has no place in the opposition pact, which practises cooperation to achieve the goal of defeating the current government. For us, Pakatan's decision will ease election preparations of the four allies."

In **Alor Star**, Kedah PKR said it had shut its doors on collaboration with Pas following the decision by the presidential council.

Kedah PKR chairman Dr Azman Ismail said the party would abide by the council's decision.

"We had thought of opening our door to Pas, but due to the announcement, we will not proceed with our plan."

He said Kedah PKR was ready to work with counterparts from DAP, PAN and PPBM in the election.

On a statement by Sungal Petani member of parliament Datuk Johari Abdul, who reportedly said PKR planned to contest 16 state seats in the election, Dr Azman said he was voicing the views of the grassroots.

"We are negotiating with DAP, PAN and PPBM on seat allocations, so what Johari said is not final," he said. **Additional reporting by Embun Majid**