

UNITY GOVT CONVENTION

CONTESTANTS IN GE16 MAY NOT GET PENSION

PM says proposal to abolish pension scheme should also apply to politicians

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DATUK Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday hinted at a proposal to abolish the pension scheme for candidates contesting the next general election.

The prime minister, who is Pakatan Harapan (PH) chairman, said this while maintaining his stance that the proposed abolition of the pension scheme should apply to politicians and not just civil servants.

"I do not agree that politicians should be excluded, but I will present this view when we study the abolition of the retirement scheme.

"I will state that it should also apply to politicians.

"This means that candidates in

the next election should accept that their scheme does not include pensions."

The Tambun member of parliament said this in his closing speech at the Perak Unity Government Convention here.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister and Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad and Perak PH chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa.

Anwar reiterated his call for elected representatives at the state and federal levels, who are entitled to more than one pension scheme, to choose only one.

He asked politicians to emulate his wife, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

"Some said former ministers or prime ministers can have three

or four pensions as assemblymen, MPs and ministers.

"Azizah did not only serve as a government doctor, but also as a Selangor assemblyman and a member of parliament.

"However, this morning, she told me that she will choose only one pension."

Last Wednesday, Zahid announced the proposed new pension scheme for the civil service, where new hires will contribute to retirement schemes like the Employee Provident Fund and Social Security Organisation.

On another matter, Anwar said non-Malay ministers would be invited to take part in the Bumiputera Economic Congress in Putrajaya next month.

"This congress is a Bumiputera congress... This congress will evaluate the projects carried out, introduce new programmes with a new approach, and identify

problems faced by non-Bumiputeras — Chinese and especially Indians — in Malaysia."

The three-day long congress starts on Feb 29.

Meanwhile, Zahid called for the strong cooperation between BN and PH to continue in the 16th General Election (GE16).

Citing an example, he said the relationship between Perak PH chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa and state BN chairman Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad should not just be among politicians, but must also be demonstrated at the grassroots level.

"Mujahid, remember that *reze-ki tidak pernah salah alamat* (good fortune is never wrongly addressed), as long as you continue to *bercium mulut* (have good rapport) with Saarani.

"There should be no fighting for positions.

"We must negotiate well."

Zahid recalled the formation of the state unity government in Perak, which has 33 out of the 59 seats in the legislative assembly, and how it was formed after PH gave way to BN to hold the position of menteri besar, despite BN winning only nine seats.

"This sincerity was what bound us at that time.

"PH, if it had wanted to, could have asked for the menteri besar seat.

"(But) it's sincerity that gave BN the mandate to become menteri besar.

"If we can maintain this sincerity, we must have it at the grassroots too to ensure that the support (of the people) goes to us," Zahid said.

The convention, held for the first time at the state level with more than 1,500 delegates, was officiated by Anwar.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (centre) joining unity government leaders in singing the national anthem at the Perak Unity Government Convention in Ipoh yesterday. With him are Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (sixth from left) and Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad (seventh from right), *bernama pic*