

# GRS, PH, BN IN SABAH POLLS SEAT TALKS

Three coalitions want to avoid going against each other, says Anwar

OLIVIA MIWIL  
KOTA KINABALU  
news@nst.com.my

**P**AKATAN Harapan (PH), Barisan Nasional (BN) and Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS) are negotiating to avoid contesting the same seats in the Sabah election.

The talks come after PH and GRS had agreed to work together in the polls, but the status of BN is uncertain.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who is PH chairman, said negotiations were to ensure that a cooperation was forged ahead of the polls.

"Our understanding is that for now, we are trying to secure an arrangement where there will be no three-cornered fights.

"We are trying to avoid going against each other," he said after chairing a PKR meeting here yesterday.

He was responding to a question on whether PH would part-

ner with BN or GRS, after BN and GRS had said they would not work together.

To another question, Anwar did not dismiss the possibility that the uncertainty of the alliances could confuse voters.

"I do not wish to preempt anything as our goal is to ensure there is complete understanding between all quarters," he added.

Anwar hoped the three coalitions would work together to align with the unity government at the federal level.

PH, he said, was willing to work with both GRS and BN.

He said a team was managing seat negotiations.

GRS chairman Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor had said his coalition would work with PH only if GRS had the lead role in such an alliance.

He also ruled out cooperating with BN.

Sabah BN chairman Datuk Seri Bung Moktar Radin had also said BN was not keen on working with GRS.

Asked about the strained ties between the three coalitions, Anwar likened the situation to a romantic relationship.

"Love can be comforting, but sometimes it hurts a bit, that is love," he said.

"Politics is the art of balance, but what's important for PH is that it plays a constructive role

and that its presence can continue the reform agenda.

"We also need cooperation from all quarters to ensure stability, peace and a strong state government that has a good relationship with the federal government for the benefit of Sabah and Malaysia," he said.

At an earlier event, Anwar said the unity government had provided Sabah with more infrastructure, funding and recognition of its rights than previous administrations.

Speaking at the closing of the 2025 National Farmers, Breeders and Fishermen's Day here, he said his government had increased the allocation for Sabah to RM16 billion.

"In 2022, the special grant stood at RM125.6 million.

"We have increased it by RM600 million," he said.

He also cited the submission of tender for the 350km Phase 1B of the Pan Borneo Highway and the handing over of electricity management to the state as examples of the administration's achievements for Sabah.

"Because of the spirit of MA63 (Malaysia Agreement 1963), there are matters that can be handled by the state government.

"Any project below RM50 million is handed to Sabah's Public Works Department."