

# MUHYIDDIN RESIGNS AS PN CHAIRMAN

Bersatu president's exit sees departure of other state PN chiefs, as well as sec-gen Azmin Ali

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**T**HE country's opposition landscape yesterday plunged into upheaval, with several senior Perikatan Nasional leaders tendering their resignations, raising questions over the coalition's unity and future direction.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who has helmed PN since its inception in 2020, announced his resignation as chairman, effective Jan 1.

"I thank the PN leadership for their support during my five years leading the coalition. I wish the PN leadership and all component parties the very best in their future endeavours," he said.

Muhyiddin retains his position as Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia president.

He did not elaborate on a succession plan in his statement.

It is understood that Muhyiddin informed party leaders about his resignation in the party's Supreme Leadership Council WhatsApp group at 10.30pm on Monday.

His resignation came amid mounting tensions within PN, particularly between Bersatu and its largest component party, Pas.

The tension came to a boil over the political crisis in Perlis. Pas' Mohd Shukri Ramli stepped down as menteri besar over the weekend, citing health reasons.

His resignation came after three Pas and five Bersatu assemblymen reportedly withdrew their support for him via statutory declarations.

Bersatu's Abu Bakar Hamzah was sworn in as MB, sparking anger among some Pas leaders, who labelled the move a "betrayal".

Within hours of Muhyiddin's announcement, several other PN leaders followed suit. Datuk Seri Azmin Ali announced his resignation as PN secretary-general.

The Hulu Kelang assemblyman



Datuk Seri Azmin Ali (left) and Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin have resigned as Perikatan Nasional secretary-general and chairman, respectively. **BERNAMA PIC**

and Selangor opposition leader also resigned as Selangor PN chief.

Later, Perak PN chairman Datuk Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu, who is also Bersatu vice-president, suggested that "hidden hands" might be at work to sow division in PN.

He said Muhyiddin's decision to step down should not be read as a sign of an internal collapse, arguing instead that there were forces attempting to destabilise PN from within or outside the coalition.

"I suspect there are hidden hands who want PN to become divided," he told the *New Straits Times*.

He said Muhyiddin's resignation was not entirely unexpected, as he had on several occasions offered to hand over the PN chairmanship to other component parties, especially after the last general election.

"He has offered the chairmanship to other component parties many times before.

"Each time, they rejected it and pledged their full support and loyalty to Muhyiddin. Pas even sent a letter to that effect."

Faizal played down concerns that Muhyiddin's and Azmin's resignations from their PN posts would weaken Bersatu.

"I don't think Muhyiddin's or Azmin's resignations will hurt us," he said, adding that Muhyiddin's decision would not dampen the morale of Bersatu members or supporters.

Asked if Pas should lead PN, Faizal said this must be a collective decision by component parties.

"No one party can decide the fate or make major decisions in PN on its own.

"Whatever decisions moving forward will be made through *musyawarah* within PN."

Other leaders who resigned were Negri Sembilan PN chairman Mohamad Hanifah Abu Baker and Johor PN chief Datuk Dr Sahrudin Jamal.

Sahrudin, who is also Bukit Kepong assemblyman, appeared to take a swipe at Pas, saying that "Muafakat Nasional can now appoint a new Johor PN chairman".

It was believed to be a reference to Pas election director Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor, who on Monday called on Umno members and supporters to revisit Muafakat Nasional, the political alliance between Umno and Pas, ahead of the 16th General Election, citing the need for political stability at the grassroots level.

Sahrudin hoped the next Johor PN chairman could ensure the coalition won more seats in Johor, where Bersatu holds two seats and Pas holds one.

"Johor PN is okay, we have no issues. We just had a meeting two weeks ago and everything is well. My resignation has nothing to do with Johor (PN)." Additional reporting by Omar Ahmad