

Stop squabbling for seats, DAP tells Pakatan allies
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 14 — The DAP has demanded Pakatan Rakyat (PR) parties stop publicly airing disagreements regarding seat negotiations, citing concerns that such incidents could affect the relationship among the coalition parties.

DAP national vice chairman Tan Kok Wai said the advice also applied to his own party members, and that PR leaders should abide by rules and guidelines set out by the pact's national leadership regarding the matter.

According to Tan, the PR leadership had drawn up specific guidelines during a recent coalition retreat. PR leaders and members have been ordered to negotiate seat allocations internally and to avoid openly discussing or criticising any coalition partner.

Tan stressed that it was "imperative" that the guidelines be observed, and that all PR parties should be seen as trusting and co-operative at all times.

But the DAP leader also admitted that discussions on seat allocations in various states are still ongoing and have "yet to be concluded."

"However, positive strides are being made in finalising the seat arrangements amongst PR coalition members for the coming general elections.

"The PR leadership will be making the necessary announcement at the appropriate time once the seat negotiation process has been finalised," he said in a statement today.

Tan reminded his own party colleagues against making any statements that may be "misconstrued" as a sign that PR parties were involved in seat tussles.

The Malaysian Insider reported on July 20 that PR leaders were confident that negotiations over state and parliamentary seat allocations among PKR, PAS and DAP could be finalised by the end of July, ahead of an anticipated early general election.

"Seat allocations were discussed in general, not in detail ... we want to finalise it by the end of the month. (July) Ideally, we want it (seat negotiations) to be resolved within the state level," DAP representative Zairil Khir Johari had told The Malaysian Insider then.

It is understood, however, that some states have yet to decide on its seat allocations, causing the issue to remain outstanding.

The recently-concluded Sarawak state election saw PKR and DAP lock horns over several key seats, which resulted in a heavily-publicised row between the leaders of both parties.

Umno has declared it can win back the PKR-held seats as the PR linchpin is seen as the weakest link in the opposition pact.

Election 2008 saw PKR become the largest opposition party in Parliament with a total of 31

MPs as BN suffered its worst performance ever, ceding five state governments and 82 parliamentary seats. PAS, despite being the largest PR party in terms of membership, had the smallest representation in Parliament with only 23 MPs after the polls.

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