

No Opposition Accord Yet On Sarawak Parliamentary Seats

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- After two rounds of talks, the PKR-DAP-PAS opposition pact has yet to reach a consensus on the allocation of the parliamentary seats each of the parties will contest in Sarawak in the next general election, according to party insiders.

They attribute the problem mainly to disagreement between DAP and PKR on the number of seats each of the parties want to contest as there are "overlapping" claims on some seats.

PAS has no overlapping claims on seats with the DAP, but the Islamic party has such claims with PKR on a few seats, they said.

Sarawak DAP Chairman Wong Ho Leng, when contacted, played down the failure to reach consensus, saying there would be more negotiations before the final decision was made.

"No consensus, but it is not problematic. There are a few overlapping (claims on) seats. Sarawak PKR said they will leave it to the 'pusat' (party's central leadership) to negotiate with us," he said.

Sarawak PKR chief Baru Bian, when contacted, expressed confidence that the seat allocation could be resolved before the general election as the negotiations between PKR and DAP were easier now as compared to the talks on seat allocation for the Sarawak state election held in April this year.

He declined to comment, however, on whether the matter would be referred to the party's national leadership for a solution.

The DAP and PKR had initially failed to reach a consensus on the number of seats to contest in the run-up to the state election. The matter was only resolved after the PKR national leadership allowed its state leadership to negotiate directly with the DAP state leadership.

Even then, they could not avoid multi-cornered fights which saw the involvement also of the opposition Sarawak National Party (SNAP).

It is learnt that the DAP and PKR are eyeing between 12 and 15 seats each out of the 31 parliamentary seats in Sarawak.

PAS is expected to contest two or three seats in the predominantly Malay areas.

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