

DAP's Fong quits Batu Gajah defence
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 10 — DAP firebrand Fong Po Kuan announced she will not defend her Batu Gajah federal seat, just as the Election Commission (EC) proclaimed the polling date for Election 2013.

The three-term lawmaker made the declaration today after saying she had notified the senior DAP leadership, The Star reported on its website.

"This is my own decision and I thank my constituents, my party and supporters for giving me a chance to represent them in Parliament," Fong (left) told the newspaper.

Her departure will be a blow for the opposition party as it is diverting its resources toward frontline states such as Johor and Negri Sembilan where it believes the opposition Pakatan Rakyat pact can bleed more seats from the ruling Barisan Nasional.

Fong defeated MCA's Cheah Yoke Can in Election 2008 by a landslide 24,627 votes.

Earlier today, the EC announced April 20 as the nomination date and set May 5 for polling in what is expected to be Malaysia's closest-ever general election.

A total of 222 parliamentary and 505 state seats will be contested. Sarawak will sit out this round of elections as the Borneo state went to the polls in 2011.

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