

PAS suggests horse trade to resolve seat clashes with PKR
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 22 — PAS mooted a fresh formula today to stop its seven-seat overlap with PKR by pulling its candidates from the Labuan, Sungai Acheh and Pantl contests.

In return, PAS suggested that PKR do the same in the three Terengganu state seats that both parties have fielded candidates: Bukit Besi, Seberang Takir and Kota Putera.

But further discussion would be needed to resolve PKR's run-in with PAS in the Kota Damansara state seat, where Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) president Dr Mohd Nasir Hashim is standing on a PKR ticket.

Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders admitted yesterday that the embarrassing seat overlaps between PKR and PAS candidates in the country's most intense polls battle was caused by a last-minute misunderstanding and technical glitches.

To resolve the issue, PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub said the PAS leadership will discuss this issue during today's meeting to find a solution for the "technical" problem.

"To me, this is a technical problem and there was a misunderstanding at the last stage in areas where there are overlaps," Salahuddin said when contacted by The Malaysian Insider

"There was a failure to handle this misunderstanding at the final stage and I believe all this will be successfully resolved in the shortest time," he said.

At the close of nominations on Saturday, PAS and its ally PKR both fielded candidates in six seats nationwide —the Labuan federal seat and five state seats — although seat negotiations in the opposition pact were said to be concluded.

The PR coalition was left red-faced over the situation, with Barisan Nasional (BN) officials taking digs at its ability to work together for such a crucial electoral contest.

The seat overlaps could likely cause a split in voter support between PAS and PKR, indirectly giving BN an upper hand in the May 5 polls — an election where every vote could tip the balance.

The Labuan federal seat will see a three-cornered fight involving PKR's Ibrahim Menudin, Hadnan Mohamad of PAS and BN's Rosman Isli.

The Sg Acheh state seat in Penang will see PAS's Mohd Yusni Mat Piah and PKR's Badrul Hisham Shahrin going up against BN's Datuk Mahmud Zakaria.

The four other state seats are Pantl, Bukit Besi, Kota Putera and Seberang Takir.

In Election 2008, the opposition denied BN its customary two-thirds win and won five states.

For Election 2013, 13.3 million voters including over 6,000 overseas voters will decide the fate of the candidates in 222 federal seats and 505 state seats. Sarawak held its state

elections in 2011.

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