

## **Amid Pakatan crisis, Anwar confirms 'reorganisation' of opposition**

**Malay Mail Online**

**June 23, 2015**

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 — In the closest indication yet that the seven-year-old Pakatan Rakyat (PR) alliance has truly ceased to exist, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim confirmed today the reported realignment of forces in Malaysia's opposition front.

The PR de facto leader revealed in a message through his lawyers that this reorganisation will involve "new" forces, including even non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and offered his assurance that once complete, the opposition will emerge united and stronger than ever.

"We are now working to forge a stronger and enduring partnership, to better serve the rakyat," the jailed former MP said in the message emailed to the media.

"I have no doubt that the opposition, reorganised with new forces including NGOs, will emerge united and stronger from these troubles," he added.

Although Anwar did not offer further details on the so-called realignment or specifically address the confusion over PR's current status, the leader made no mention of the pact in his statement, referring only to "the opposition".

The three-party PR alliance comprising PKR, DAP and PAS was thrown into a state of uncertainty recently after PAS decided during its June 6 muktamar to cut ties with the DAP.

The decision later led to the DAP declaring PR's death as a coalition.

PKR, in an attempt to ensure the fallout between its allies does not cause the fall of the two governments that PR rules — Selangor and Penang — has since said that the spirit of the pact lives on although it no longer functions formally.

PAS, on the other hand, has continued to insist that PR still lives on.

The crisis has since triggered talk of the possible formation of a new alliance, one that will include a new party to replace PAS.

This new party will likely be formed by Persatuan Ummah Sejahtera Malaysia (PasMa), a PAS splinter group, whose leaders recently confirmed plans to start a new political entity.

PasMa chief Datuk Phahrolrazi Zawawi has also said that the ideology of the new party will be similar to that of PAS before it severed ties with DAP, with emphasis on protecting the rights of all while practising a policy of inclusivity.

PasMa, an NGO, was set up in Kota Baru to ensure PAS remains in PR, in what is seen as a challenge to president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang's conservative leadership in the party.

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