

Shahidan Challenges PR To Name PM In Shadow Cabinet
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 19 (Bernama) -- Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Shahidan Kassim on Tuesday challenged the opposition Pakatan Rakyat to name the prime minister in its shadow cabinet which the three PR partners could not agree upon.

He said the prime minister was usually picked from the strongest or dominant party and that in this context, the DAP had the most number of parliamentary seats among the three partners, the other two being PKR and PAS.

"The party with the majority now is the DAP which has 37 seats. The PKR has 29 seats and PAS, 21 seats. As such, the prime minister should come from the DAP.

"Or do they want to give the post to the opposition leader? However, if the opposition leader comes from a weak party, then that person cannot be a strong prime minister," he told reporters at the lobby of Parliament House.

PKR president and Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said yesterday that PR would revive its shadow cabinet to strengthen the check-and-balance system. She had said that the shadow cabinet would comprise PR MPs.

However, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, speaking to reporters at the lobby of Parliament House Tuesday, rejected Dr Wan Azizah's shadow cabinet proposal, saying it was impractical.

Lim, who is the Penang chief minister, said the DAP had set up its own shadow cabinet and announced a list of 18 portfolios comprising the party's MPs.

The Bagan MP said none of the portfolios were allocated to himself, Gelang Patah MP and DAP advisor Lim Kit Siang or Kepong MP Dr Tan Seng Giaw.

The DAP shadow cabinet named, among others, Tony Pua Kiam Wee (DAP-Petaling Jaya Utara) for the Finance and Economic portfolio, with Oscar Ling Chai Yew (DAP-Sibu) and Wong Tien Fatt (DAP-Sandakan) to assist.

Puchong MP Gobind Singh Deo was named to head the Home Ministry and Law portfolio, with Ram Karpal Singh (DAP-Bukit Gelugor), Ngeh Koo Ham (DAP-Beruas) and Thomas Su Keng Siong (DAP-Ipoh Timur) to assist.

M. Kulasegaran (DAP-Ipoh Barat) was to take charge of the Foreign and Defence portfolio, with Julian Tan Kok Ping (DAP-Stampin) and Kasthuriraani Patto (DAP-Batu Kawan) to assist.

Lim said he was not the prime minister in the shadow cabinet.

"I am the party leader and I wish to delegate responsibility to all MPs so that they can focus on their portfolios," he said.

PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said the PR must win the general election first before even thinking of the cabinet line-up.

"It does not matter if my name is not entered (in the list). The important thing is for us to win, not who get to become ministers," he told reporters.

Dr Wan Azizah, speaking to reporters today at the lobby of Parliament, said the PR shadow cabinet could not be realised due to the financial factor and disagreement among the partners.

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