

PKR, PAS to discuss opposition pact's future tomorrow
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By Anisah Shukry

PKR and PAS are set to meet tomorrow afternoon to discuss forging a new alliance, amid uncertainty over the state of the opposition following the dissolution of Pakatan Rakyat.

Despite reservations from DAP, PKR secretary-general Rafizi Ramli said tomorrow's meeting was necessary to ensure opposition parties worked together in a "one-to-one fight" against Barisan Nasional (BN).

"It's a process that you have to go through, about sitting down with them, listening to their concerns. Number one, we need to impress on every party of the need to achieve a one-to-one fight.

"PKR has this burden that we have to bring everyone together.

"My position is quite clear, although quite different, I think PAS will find it very difficult to fit in. But that doesn't mean we must exclude them from the process," Rafizi told reporters after speaking at PKR's Kongres Mahasiswa Kebangsaan in Ampang Jaya, Selangor.

But he added that PKR was prepared for the possibility PAS would refuse to join the new coalition.

If that happened, the "new Pakatan" and PAS could establish an electoral cooperation to ensure that they would not contest the same seats, said Rafizi, comparing it with the opposition's strategy in the 2008 general election.

Rafizi added that PKR president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail would create a new common policy framework with clearer principles, to prevent the new pact from going down the same path as Pakatan.

"Whether PAS wants to fit in or not, I think it's very much a decision by PAS. What I can be very sure about is that a new coalition will not repeat the looseness of the last coalition.

"It'll be defined by a set of very clear policies, principles, even mechanisms for decision-making so I think any party who wants to join it must also be very clear of the commitment."

He said Dr Wan Azizah would spell out the key principles after gathering feedback from the other parties.

Rafizi said PKR had also invited DAP to a separate meeting, but the party had yet to respond.

Pakatan was declared dead in June after delegates at the PAS muktamar approved a motion to cut ties with DAP while remaining in the coalition.

The decision came after DAP announced it would no longer work with PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang.

The two parties were also locked in a protracted row over hudud, the Islamic criminal law that PAS intends to implement in Kelantan.

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng has said the party would not accept PAS in the new coalition as the two had reached a point of no return.

Hadi had also reportedly said PAS would not join the new pact because their sole goal was to win the next election, and not fight for Islam. – September 13, 2015.

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