

**Pakatan Harapan the only functional opposition coalition, PAS told
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BY SHAZWAN MUSTAFA KAMAL**

PKR's Rafizi Ramli says although PKR and PAS still maintain ties, it should not be misconstrued to mean that the two parties are part of a formal coalition. – File pic

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 27 — Leaders in PKR and PAS appear to be in disagreement over the extent of their respective party's ties with one another, with some in the latter party claiming theirs is a formal cooperation under Pakatan Rakyat (PR), while some in the former insist the pact no longer exists.

PKR leaders approached by *Malay Mail Online* said Pakatan Harapan, which was formed recently to replace PR, is currently the only functional opposition coalition.

Their views were unsurprisingly echoed by leaders in the DAP, whose fallout with PAS earlier this year was said to be the cause of PR's death as a coalition.

"It is clear cut that PKR is now in a formal coalition with Pakatan Harapan," PKR secretary-general Rafizi Ramli told *Malay Mail Online*.

He explained that although PKR and PAS still maintain ties, it should not be misconstrued to mean that the two parties are part of a formal coalition.

"The coalition with DAP and Amanah in Pakatan Harapan does allow each respective party to continue to engage other political parties so long it does not violate the common policies agreed with Pakatan Harapan.

"It is in that context that PKR continues its engagement with PAS.

"There is no formal coalition that mirrors Pakatan Harapan that PKR has with PAS now," he said.

Another senior PKR leader said that the reason why PAS is now insisting that PR was still alive was because it now realises it is without any political allies.

"PAS realises it is lonely, and now they are trying to resuscitate a dead coalition hoping that they can cement some form of political commitment from PKR.

"This won't work, they will have to decide where they want to go in the future and whether they want to work with Pakatan Harapan," the PKR MP said on condition of anonymity.

DAP's Liew Chin Tong said PAS should call for a PR leadership council meeting as a test to see whether the political pact was still truly functional.

"Call for a PR leadership meeting and see who turns up," he said.

Former PAS leader Datuk Kamaruddin Jaafar said PAS's actions showed that the party realised that it cannot survive without aligning itself to a coalition or pact.

“Wishful thinking on their part ... PAS is testing the waters, they think by doing they can hold on to whatever ties they think they have left,” the Tumpat MP, who recently joined PKR told *Malay Mail Online*.

PAS has said it believes PR is still a functioning coalition even without the DAP, and has announced plans to strengthen the pact with the help of PKR and other parties in the peninsula as well as in east Malaysia.

In a statement last weekend, PAS deputy president Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man said that without the DAP, PR is still seen as a sturdy and viable political platform.

Tuan Ibrahim also said a recent meeting held with PKR resulted in an agreement to strengthen cooperation through discussions at the state level and the federal territories.

PAS had earlier this year cut off ties with the DAP, leading to the reported demise of the seven-year-old PR pact.

The death of the pact, announced by the DAP, later led to the formation of Pakatan Harapan, which includes PAS offshoot Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah).

Although Pakatan Harapan is said to have left its doors open to PAS, the Islamist party has refused to join the pact.

The situation has created uncertainty on the opposition front, particularly in Selangor, which currently counts members from both DAP and PAS as well as PKR as part of its administrative team.

Earlier last week, PKR deputy president and Selangor Menteri Besar Azmin Ali said Selangor and Penang's differing situation meant a Pakatan Harapan government was not needed in the former state, also reportedly confirming PKR supreme council's resolution two weeks ago to work with all federal opposition parties including PAS, PSM and those in Sabah and Sarawak.

PAS only holds one state seat in DAP-dominated Penang, while the Islamist party accounts for 13 of the Selangor state assembly against DAP's 15, PKR's 13, Barisan Nasional's 12, Amanah's two seats and one independent assemblyman.

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