

Azmin: Bersatu still open to seat negotiations
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Selangor Menteri Besar Mohamed Azmin Ali said he has spoken to state Bersatu chief Abdul Rashid Asari and the latter remains open to discussion on seat negotiations in Selangor.

This comes after Selangor Bersatu yesterday **declined** to recognise the outcome of the ongoing Selangor Pakatan Harapan state assembly seat negotiations.

“I am confident that this process can be resolved. I spoke to Selangor Bersatu chief Abdul Rashid last night and I am happy to note that Bersatu will continue to discuss (seat negotiations).

“I strongly believe that Selangor Harapan will continue this process,” Azmin told reporters after Friday prayers at Masjid Ukay Perdana in Ampang today.

He said that seat negotiations within a political coalition were part of the democratic process.

“Democracy is a noisy process. If everyone sits quietly and does not speak, that’s a dictator. But if there is a bit of noise, that is democracy and I celebrate this process of democracy.

“Don’t worry,” Azmin added.

He explained that component parties needed to engage with their grassroots and party workers before bringing their concerns back to the table to discuss on seat negotiations.

The process so far has been “very positive” and “very forthcoming”, he said.

“So I am glad to share with you that Harapan will continue the process and, Insyah Allah, soon we will resolve this issue,” he said.

In refusing to recognise the outcome of seat negotiations in Selangor on Wednesday, Bersatu said it had previously stated its intention to contest 12 state seats in Selangor currently being held by Umno.

They were unhappy that PKR has expressed interest in the same 12 seats.

Meanwhile, Azmin also addressed reports that PAS assemblypersons in Selangor faced obstacles in securing state allocations for development activities in their constituencies.

He said the Selangor government was the only government in the world to provide allocations for opposition lawmakers.

“There isn’t a government in the world that gives funding to their opposition.

“No such thing at the parliamentary level even. As the Gombak MP, I do not get any allocation. There are no such allocations in the other states but in Selangor, we give allocations to BN (assemblypersons) as well.

“If I can give (allocations) to Umno, no way I do not give to Pakatan Rakyat or Pakatan Harapan,” he said.

However, Azmin said there was procedure to be followed and if anyone encountered any issue, they should meet with the district officers or with him.

“There is no need to meet with the sultan,” he said.

Asked about talk going around that he was afraid to defend his seat in Gombak and his Bukit Antarabangsa state seat, he said as a leader, he must be prepared to contest anywhere.

But in the end, it is up to the people to decide on their leader, Azmin added.

“I am confident that because of our state government’s policies and programmes, which care for the well-being of the rakyat, the rakyat will continue to defend the current (state) government.

“So, it is not a question of where I am contesting but wherever I am placed, I am responsible to provide service to the rakyat,” he said.

Their responsibility to the rakyat should not be forgotten in the interest of political issues, Azmin stressed.

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