

Azmin Must Act Now On Seat Allocations To Remain As MB

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By MT Webmaster

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(TMI) – AZMIN Ali has to act decisively and resolve the uncertainty over seat negotiations in Selangor and improve ties with Pakatan Harapan leaders if he wants to remain as menteri besar, said an independent pollster and PH insiders.

They said resolving seat negotiations quickly would help Azmin following his earlier stance that PH should work with PAS, which did not go down well with Bersatu and the Islamist party's splinter, Amanah. PKR, DAP, Amanah and Bersatu make up the PH opposition coalition.

Ilham Centre executive director Hisommudin Bakar said this is the time for Azmin to restore the confidence of his friends in PH over his leadership.

"He has to position himself as a general in a war, which suits his position as PH's election chief and make a decision quickly," the independent researcher told The Malaysian Insight.

"The seat allocation issue in Selangor among PH partners is now critical.

"It could lift PH's spirit nationwide if Selangor can resolve this issue earlier than other states," he said.

According to a PH source, all PH parties in Selangor have agreed on a basic formula to hold on to the seats they have.

"The consensus is that all the 20 seats previously contested by PAS will now be divided between Amanah and Bersatu," said the source.

This formula, however, has hit a snag as PKR has made a stand that it wanted some of these seats to fortify its position in the pact.

“Amanah and Bersatu have reached a mutual consensus on this. Therefore, I think it has to be finalised immediately at the PH level,” said the source.

In 2013, the then Pakatan Rakyat captured 44 seats in the 56-seat assembly. PAS and DAP each secured 15 seats while PKR won 14 seats. The remaining seats were won by BN and two seats are now held by independents.

A source said PKR is making a play for some of the PAS and Umno seats as it wanted to form the government on its own and not be dependent on Amanah and DAP.

Hisommudin said as part of its strategy to win more seats in Selangor, as recently as two weeks ago, PKR sent feelers to PAS about working together during the 14th general election.

PKR offered current PAS assemblymen, who disagreed with their party’s central committee decision not to work with PKR, a chance to contest the election on a PKR ticket.

Hisommudin said PH sources told him that Azmin had sent his representative to negotiate with the representative of the PAS president for the final time.

However, the effort failed when PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang decided to end cooperation with PKR, Hisommudin said.

“I was told that the representative for the PAS president told Azmin’s representative that the door (for cooperation) was not only shut, in fact, it was locked and the key thrown into the Marang sea.”

The situation went downhill after that.

A decision by PAS Kelantan not to appoint PKR representatives as parliamentary and state seats coordinators in the state aggravated ties seen crucial in the effort to win GE14.

PKR remains as council members of the local authority and board members of the state government's subsidiaries.

Azmin reacted to this decision in Kelantan by blocking the Selangor government's allocation to the Islamist party's assemblymen in the state.

He also blocked PAS Selangor's application to use the state government's premises for its programmes.

It is learnt that PAS Selangor is looking at appealing to the Sultan of Selangor if no explanation is forthcoming from Azmin on the allocation cuts to its assemblymen.

Hisommudin said it was a good political ploy by Azmin.

"To me, this is the best exit plan for PKR with PAS after the party slammed the door for cooperation tightly," he said.

At the recent PH convention, Bersatu was given 52 parliamentary seats, PKR (51), DAP (35) and Amanah (27).

PH had also set January 31 as the final date to finalise the seat allocations at the state level.

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