

Malaysia's Opposition In A Stand-Off Over Selangor

MALAYSIA TODAY

Feb 23, 2018

By MT Webmaster

Four parties locked in dispute over who will run for state seats

Shannon Teoh, The Straits Times

Malaysia's opposition alliance has been locked for over a month in a tense stalemate over seats in Selangor, with longstanding grouses boiling to the surface. The four parties have busted two deadlines to finalise who will stand across the 56 state legislative wards.

A third and final cut-off looms today, before party chiefs in Malaysia's richest state have to relinquish negotiations to the national-level leaders of Pakatan Harapan (PH) in a forced compromise.

Selangor has been a stronghold of the federal opposition parties for the past decade, but the squabble has raised questions over whether they can unite and defend the state in a general election expected in the first half of the year.

The dispute over the 56 state assembly seats has seen a public and heated war of words, unlike the 222 Parliament seats nationwide settled behind closed-doors by top PH leaders.

The PH government in Selangor is headed by Menteri Besar Azmin Ali, who is Parti Keadilan Rakyat's (PKR) deputy president.

The other PH members are the Democratic Action Party (DAP), Parti Amanah Negara, and Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) led by former premier Mahathir Mohamad.

The feud comes as the ruling Umno ramps up efforts to recapture the state it considers a prized jewel. Umno has recruited four of Datuk Seri Azmin's predecessors to lead its charge, including Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim, who is hell-bent on making the opposition regret its decision to replace him as Menteri Besar in 2014.

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