

Perak politics: All eyes on Sultan Nazrin

KUALA LUMPUR: The focus is now on the decision to be made by the Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Shah, after Datuk Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu failed to obtain the majority support of the state assemblymen in the motion of vote of confidence on the menteri besar at the state assembly sitting yesterday.

Most constitutional experts are of the opinion that he needs to seek an audience with the Sultan of Perak to inform the matter apart from resigning or proposing the dissolution of the state legislative assembly.

Constitutional expert Dr Nizamuddin Alias, who is senior lecturer at the Faculty of Human Sciences, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), said the move was in line with the parliamentary democracy system or Westminster practised in Malaysia all this while.

"So, the menteri besar should have an audience with the Sultan. He can also request for the dissolution of the assembly. Usually in parliamentary democracy, no-confidence motion is made but this does not happen, then there was a vote of confidence in the hope of support but the opposite happens.

"For me, this is a crisis of confidence in Perak because basically a menteri besar must get the majority support. When this motion occurs, it means that the people's representatives have lost faith and confidence," he told Bernama.

Meanwhile, another constitutional expert from Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) Datuk Dr Wan Ahmad Fauzi Wan Husain said if the Sultan did not give his consent for the dissolution of the state assembly, then the menteri besar should resign.

"This process is not unusual.. this is the Sultan's prerogative," he said, adding that if the option to dissolve the assembly is chosen, then state election should be held within 60 days.

He said another possible scenario was that the Yang di-Pertuan Agong could declare a state of emergency under Article 150 (1) of the Federal Constitution after taking into account security and economic factors as well as public order.

"The prime minister can present a proposal for emergency declaration in Perak due to that factor. If the situation exists then the King can allow it," he said.

If this happens, the Sultan of Perak has the option to appoint a caretaker government to manage the state administration without involving big decisions, he added.

Commenting on the political aspects of Perak, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) lecturer Anuar Shah Bali Mahomed said Perak was a 'swing state' where the composition and support for the government has been changing since 2008.

This can be seen in the last general elections where no political party has a simple majority of 30 seats in the state legislative assembly.

"We can see now that not a single party has a simple majority of 30 seats out of the 59 available seats. Umno has the most seats now (25).

"This is the reason why it is quite difficult for a menteri besar to last long. Perak politics will always changing and this involves the game of numbers," he said.

Perak has 59 assemblymen comprising 25 from Barisan Nasional, Bersatu (four), PAS (three), DAP (16), PKR (three), Amanah (five), Gerakan (one) and Independent (two). - Bernama