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Nik Aziz - Razaleigh

KU LI REJOINING UMNO SETTLES ALL PROBLEMS- NIK AZIZ

KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said today Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's move to rejoin Umno has strengthened Malay unity in the country and has helped to resolve several problems which cropped up recently in the state.

Commending Razaleigh for making the move, Nik Aziz said this clearly showed that the Parti Melayu Semangat 46 President supported Umno and by the same token supported Umno's move to amend the Federal Constitution to limit the powers of the Rulers.

"InsyaAllah (Malay unity is gaining strength). In the issue arising in Kelantan over the amendments to the state constitution, it appears that Tengku Razaleigh's rejoining Umno indirectly meant S46 members supported the amendments as we are only implementing what has been done by the Federal authorities," he said.

"When they rejoin Umno today, they are supporting what has been done by the Federal Government," he said when commenting on the announcement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that Tengku Razaleigh would be rejoining Umno.

Nik Aziz is here to attend the opening of the corporate headquarters of the Koperasi Usaha Bersatu (KUB) and the signing of an agreement between the Kelantan Economic Development Corporation (PKINK) and KUB. Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim officiated at the functions.

Nik Aziz described Razaleigh's action as normal among groups which held to democratic principles.

"For people who subscribe to democracy, party hopping is normal for them. But for me, many problems which surfaced in Kelantan will be settled," he said.

"They should accept my congratulations because they have resolved many problems in Kelantan," he said.

Asked whether Razaleigh was the main source of the problems which arose in Kelantan lately, Nik Aziz said: "In the past few days they have been picking up quarrels with me for no reason. For no rhyme nor reason."

Now PAS was however relieved that the problems would settle down on their own with Razaleigh rejoining Umno which amended the Federal Constitution to limit the powers of the Rulers.

PAS was now merely doing what Umno had done, he said.

The PAS-S46 dispute took a turning point when the PAS led Kelantan Government decided to amend the state constitution to limit the powers of the Sultan of Kelantan whom it felt had interfered in the state administration.

Eventhough PAS, S46, Hamim and Berjasa were partners in the ruling Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (APU), PAS refused to discuss with S46 the proposal to amend the state constitution resulting in both parties attacking each other.

Asked whether Razaleigh's move meant S46 had withdrawn from APU, Nik Aziz said: "The S46 President had decided to leave and I believe no one is going to take over the party's leadership and hence APU now only comprises PAS, Hamim and Berjasa."

Nik Aziz reiterated his earlier statement that S46 ceased to exist when Tengku Razaleigh declared that he was in spirit an Umno member.

Asked whether there were signs that S46 assemblymen would be joining PAS, he said: "That I cannot say."

Every assemblyman in Kelantan would be considered a partner and friend unless they wanted to leave APU and rejoin Umno, he said.

Asked on the possibility of S46 assemblymen wanting to retain the party even without Razaleigh and continuing their cooperation within APU, the Kelantan Menteri Besar said PAS would treat them well as it felt their attitude was not much different from that of PAS.

Asked whether PAS proposed to cooperate with Umno or merge with Umno and become a Barisan Nasional member, Nik Aziz said: "The world revolves around a competitive system. Not only democracy requires competitiveness but also the Islamic system." -- BERNAMA

AH AAM