

19/04/1997

Umno's policy barrier to Pas, says Nik Aziz

KOTA BARU, Fri. - Pas cannot co-operate politically with Umno because of the latter's nationalist policy which is not based on Islamic principles, Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said today.

He said Pas would not succumb to Umno politically although the two parties had embarked on an economic co-operation, after the joint venture project between the Pas State Government-controlled Keloil Sdn Bhd and Umno-controlled KUB Malaysia Bhd.

KUB and Keloil had signed an agreement early this month to jointly develop a petrochemical township at Pantai Senok in Bachok. Present to witness the agreement signing, held on April 4, were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed and Nik Aziz.

"Pas can have economic ties with Umno but not political ones unless its (Umno) policy is Islamic.

"Yet we (in Pas) must have some form of ties with those whose politics are not Islamic so that we can make them understand what Islam is about," he told reporters at his residence at Pulau Melaka.

Nik Aziz, also Pas head of consultative council, said he was happy to note the changes in Umno now that the party was making efforts to become closer to Islamic principles.

"It's because of pressure from us (Pas) that Umno is implementing its Islamic policies.

"Hence, Pas needs to exist as an opposition to safeguard the Malays and Islam," he added.

When asked what was it that was un-Islamic about Umno, Nik Aziz said it was the party's policy.

"Umno's policy is nationalist not Islamic," he said, "but if Umno can change it to an Islamic one, we in Pas see no problem to be with them."

Nik Aziz said Pas would continue to strengthen its position as an opposition though he agreed that the move would result in a split among the Muslims.

"Even in Umno itself, the members are divided. If Pas does not exist, there will also be a split. It is part of human history, a sign of life."

However, he said it was important to ensure the split did not cause destruction.

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