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Manifesto-Reaction

ALTERNATIVE FRONT WILL NOT GO FAR, SAYS TENGKU RAZALEIGH

KOTA BAHARU, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Kelantan Umno liaison committee chief Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said the four-party opposition alliance calling itself the alternative front will not go far in unseating the governing Barisan Nasional in the coming general election going by its joint manifesto launched yesterday.

According to him, the alliance itself did not enjoy as much support as it made it out to be as each party depended on the supporters of another to portray a picture of solid following.

"They are not compatible ideologically and there's no semblance of consensus. That's why we see an omission here, another omission there when we read their manifesto yesterday," he said.

Tengku Razaleigh told reporters this when approached here today for reaction to the alternative front's manifesto which he said glaringly omitted any mention of PAS' pursuit for an Islamic nation.

The manifesto of the alternative front, comprising PAS, the DAP, Keadilan and Parti Rakyat Malaysia, is entitled "towards a more just Malaysia".

Tengku Razaleigh said the front's decision not to use a common election symbol in the coming polls also reflected the pact members' lack of confidence in each other.

"A possible motive behind this is that a pact member garnering more votes that the other can override the terms of alliance and insist that individual party cause be put first. This will be chaotic and will divide the front," he said.

Tengku Razaleigh said the omission of the much-touted PAS call for an Islamic nation from the manifesto showed that the party was willing to compromise a cause as long it secured position and support.

Meanwhile, in KUALA LUMPUR, PAS vice-president Abdul Hadi Awang said although the front's manifesto made no mention of the party's struggle to set up an Islamic state, PAS would still pursue this aspiration as enshrined in the party's constitution.

Any backtracking on this expressed desire would require endorsement from the party's general assembly, Abdul Hadi told reporters at Parliament House lobby.

Translating that aspiration into reality would also depend on whether or not PAS could secure a convincing parliamentary majority in the coming general election, said Abdul Hadi, who is also Member of Parliament for Marang.

"Let us win first and then we talk about Islamic state. Let's see how many seats we can get, now it's too early, let's wait for the general election results," he said.

Abdul Hadi said PAS would launch a separate manifesto on forming an Islamic government in Terengganu and would launch it after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad dissolved Parliament later.

Also speaking to reporters at Parliament House lobby in KUALA LUMPUR, Umno Youth acting chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein described the alternative front's manifesto as strange as it did not spell out the struggles of the pact members.

"I'm curious why the manifesto does not feature PAS' desire to set up an Islamic state or the DAP's cause for a Malaysian Malaysia," said Hishammuddin.

He said the parties' willingness to abandon their cause reflected the inconsistency of their stand and showed that the alliance between them was purely for the convenience of fishing for votes from the electorate.

In ALOR SETAR, Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid said the manifesto showed the DAP was in control of the front while PAS' role had been weakened.

This is evident from the omission of PAS' cherished plan to set up an Islamic state from the manifesto, he said.

"It is clear the Alternative Front is being led by the DAP as the party strongly opposed the setting up of an Islamic state," he told reporters.

PAS had to compromise on the issue to the DAP, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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