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PAS-Unity

FADZIL WELCOMES MAHATHIR'S STATEMENT ON UNITY TALKS

KOTA BAHARU, Feb 22 (Bernama) -- PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor today welcomed Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that Umno is studying the conditions imposed by PAS relating to the proposed discussions on Malay unity between the two parties.

He said following the statement by Dr Mahathir yesterday, it was appropriate that the technical committees of the two parties meet immediately to make a decision on the conditions.

"They (Umno) invite us (to the discussions on Malay unity), therefore we can impose conditions. We did not even call it conditions, only as requests for them to consider," he told reporters here.

The discussions were to have taken place last Monday as announced by Dr Mahathir, the Prime Minister and Umno president.

But on Sunday, Fadzil called for a postponement saying PAS had yet to receive feedback on a conducive atmosphere for the meeting and that several technical matters had yet to be ironed out.

Fadzil, who is the Opposition Leader, welcomed Umno's willingness to remain committed to the meeting with PAS as this would help avoid any long delay in holding the discussions following the new requests by PAS.

He said whether the meeting could be held early or not depended on the decision reached by the technical committees of the two parties.

"This matter (PAS' requests) is very simple for them (Umno)...are they agreeable or not, that's all. The decision lies with Umno," he said.

Asked on the possibility of Umno raising the issue of PAS members allegedly labelling Umno members infidels in "exchange" for meeting PAS' requests, Fadzil said Umno could bring this up at the meeting of the technical committees.

"If Umno wants to raise the infidel labelling issue, they may do so at that (technical committee) meeting. If they do so, we can give an explanation," he said.

Meanwhile, PAS secretary-general Nasharudin Mat Isa said PAS was not involved in the decision to hold the discussions on Malay unity last Monday and that it was Umno which unilaterally decided on the date.

Nasharudin, who heads the PAS Technical Committee, said PAS was still waiting for Umno to call for a new meeting of the two technical committees.

"So far there has be no response at all from Umno, so we don't have anything. There has been no invitation since the second meeting (of the technical committees)," he said.

He said Umno should not come out with its own conditions because Umno was the one that invited PAS to the discussions on Malay unity.

--BERNAMA

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