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Mahathir-Fadzil

MAHATHIR HOPES FADZIL WILL BE READY FOR TALKS UPON RETURN FROM HAJ

JITRA, March 4 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad hopes PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor will be ready to meet him to discuss about Malay unity when the latter returns home after performing the haj.

"I hope Fadzil, when in front of the Kaabah, will realise the need to take part in the meeting," said the Prime Minister and Umno president.

"We may oppose each other but what's wrong if we sit down together and discuss. There will be some (matters) that we will agree upon and some which we will not. That's normal," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Kubang Pasu Umno division chief, said this when simultaneously opening the annual meetings of 135 branches within the division at Dewan Jitra.

Umno has invited PAS to attend talks on Malay unity between the leaders of the two parties. PAS is willing to attend the talks but has set three pre-conditions.

Dr Mahathir said the Malay community was facing a split because of the establishment of PAS.

PAS, he said, resorted to telling lies and using religion for its own political interests.

"After this, some people may say the Umno-PAS meeting cannot be held as Umno is always attacking PAS. But they don't realise that PAS too has been attacking Umno every day.

"We may oppose each other but what's wrong if we sit down together and discuss," he said.

Dr Mahathir called on Umno branch leaders to explain to the people on the origins and struggles of Umno which were different from those of PAS.

He said Umno was formed to restore the dignity of the Malay community and the nation after being colonised by the British for 450 years, and its struggles were for the religion, race and country.

He claimed PAS, in contrast, was set up by ulamas who left Umno because they feared they would not be chosen as candidates in the general election.

"PAS did not fight for the religion right from the outset. PAS was formed because they wanted to become candidates and obtain money. To become YBs and obtain cars," said Dr Mahathir.

He said it was important for Umno branch leaders to explain the origins and struggles of the party to the people so that they continued to support Umno and the Government.

Dr Mahathir again stressed on the importance of Malay unity so that the community continued to prosper.

"When the Malays stand solidly behind their leaders, the leaders become stronger and Umno gets stronger to carry on struggling for the wellbeing of the community," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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