

10 MAR 2001

Nik Aziz-Unity

NIK AZIZ PROPOSES ONLY ONE PARTY FOR MALAYS

KOTA BAHARU, March 10 (Bernama) -- PAS Spiritual Leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat has proposed another subject be included in the agenda of the Umno-PAS Malay unity talks -- only one party be retained for Malays in this country.

He said as long as there were two parties to represent the Malays such as PAS and Umno as at present, it would be difficult to unite the Malays.

"If Umno very much wants Malay unity, we have to consider doing away with one party, the party which will have to be done away with, we set aside that matter for the time being," he said when delivering a ceramah at Padang Perdana here last night.

Yesterday, Nik Aziz welcomed the statement by Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the proposed meeting between Umno and PAS was to discuss matters involving Malay interests such as the rights and privileges of the Malays, the position of Islam, the National Language and the status of the Malay Rulers as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

PAS had earlier stated that the meeting's formal agenda should cover questions such as the position of Islam, democracy, judiciary and the economy.

It then added another three conditions which had to be met before the meeting could be held --- the Federal Government should restore oil royalty payment to Terengganu, permit Harakah (PAS official organ) to be published twice a week and drop the plan to prevent the use of the word "Islam" in the names of organisations including political parties.

Nik Aziz, who is Kelantan Menteri Besar, said the proposal to retain only one party would be submitted to PAS President Datuk Fadzil Noor on his return from Mecca for discussion by the party's supreme committee before being brought to the Umno-PAS meeting.

"We will take the party which champions Islam up to the hereafter. Umno also talks about Islam, PAS also talks about Islam. The people can decide as to which party really champions Islam and retain it."

"If it is not PAS, then Umno, if not Umno, then PAS.....the party which will have to be thrown away will surely be the one with disease," he said.

Nik Aziz stressed that once Islam's honour was upheld, automatically the fate of the Malays would be taken care of.

He said his proposal was not something impossible as previously Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) was dissolved "as a condition for its members to join Umno."

"When the Barisan Nasional (BN) accepted S46 (members) before, the Umno President laid down the condition that S46 should be dissolved ....S46 President (Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah) accepted the Umno condition, causing S46 to be slaughtered," he said.

-- BERNAMA

BD RON AAM