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Fadzil-Talks

PAS OPTS FOR DELEGATION MEETING, WANTS NATIONAL INTERESTS DISCUSSED

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 6 (Bernama) -- PAS wants the proposed Umno-PAS-Keadilan talks to be a delegation-level meeting and not one involving just the presidents of the three parties.

"This is to allow more views to be presented," PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor told reporters at the party's headquarters here today after the PAS Central Committee met to decide on the format for the talks.

Umno had proposed the "Malay unity" talks among the presidents of the three parties with the option of delegations joining the discussions.

Fadzil said PAS wants the discussions to cover issues of national interests as well and not be restricted to Malay unity.

He said it would be inappropriate for the meeting to discuss the interests of just one race because talks on unity should cover all the races in the country.

Asked if other parties should also be included in the talks, Fadzil said PAS at this stage was accepting Umno's proposal for a meeting among Umno, PAS and Keadilan, but would later think of including leaders from parties representing other communities.

He said PAS had set up a technical committee headed by party secretary-general Nasharudin Mat Isa to discuss with representatives from Umno and Keadilan on the procedures for the meeting.

Only after that could the meeting's scope and agenda could be discussed, he said.

Fadzil confirmed that he received a letter on the proposed talks from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is Umno president, a few days ago.

He said he would reply to the letter once Dr Mahathir returns from Myanmar next week.

"We will discuss about the venue and time for the meeting later, but PAS is suggesting that it be held at Parliament House," he said.

The PAS chief said the party would send its top leaders to the meeting and hoped Umno and Keadilan would do likewise.

On Suqui's decision yesterday to "put aside" seven election appeals touching on Malay rights, Fadzil said the Chinese lobby group had already agreed to do that at a meeting with the Barisan Alternatif (BA) secretariat led by Dr Chandra Muzaffar last month.

"We (BA) have long regarded the issue as settled but we are uncertain as to whether the Government will accept the other (76) appeals," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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