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Fadzil-Talks

PAS PREPARED TO PROCEED WITH UNITY TALKS, SAYS FADZIL

PENDANG, March 16 (Bernama) -- PAS is prepared to proceed with the talks with Umno leaders on Malay unity but wants preconditions it has set to be met, its president, Datuk Fadzil Noor, said today.

He said that the preconditions set by PAS for the talks should be met to show Umno's sincerity.

"We are not asking for much, we are only asking to be given back what we had before. They must be sincere if they want to have the talks," he told reporters here today when asked to comment on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday asking PAS to state its stand on the matter.

PAS called off the proposed talks previously scheduled for Feb 19 at the eleventh hour and set three preconditions for the talks to be held.

It wants the payment of oil royalty to the PAS-led Terengganu government to be reinstated instead of the special payment channelled directly to the people in the state by the federal government, that the party's official organ "Harakah" be allowed to be published twice weekly as previously and not twice monthly at present, and that the proposal by Umno for the ban of the use of the word Islam in the name of political parties be called off.

Dr Mahathir has said that the discussion should focus on the interests of the Malays covering the special rights of the Malays, the position of Islam as the official religion and Bahasa Melayu as the national language, and the status of the Malay Rulers as enshrined in the constitution.

Fadzil said that PAS was not fixing any agenda for discussion and was prepared to discuss any matter.

PAS, said Fadzil, had not set the time frame for the talks to be held and was prepared to have the discussion at any time.

-- BERNAMA

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