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Rafidah-PAS

PRE-CONDITIONS PROOF PAS NOT SERIOUS IN UNITY TALKS, SAYS RAFIDAH

KUALA LUMPUR, March 10 (Bernama) -- PAS' latest move to impose fresh condition before the Malay unity talks between the party and Umno is yet another delay tactic clearly showing they were not serious to discuss Malay unity.

Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said it appeared that PAS seemed to be not keen to participate in the talks as it had been adding on to the pre-conditions that could render the talks difficult to materialise.

PAS leaders should not set conditions before agreeing to the proposed talks with their Umno counterparts as the initiative was for the common good of the Malay race, she told reporters after opening the Lasik Centre at a leading shopping complex here today. The centre provides laser eye treatment.

PAS secretary-general Nasharuddin Mat Isa told a ceramah at Kampung Titi Teras in Yan on Thursday night that the party wished to include freedom to peaceful assembly as one of the pre-conditions for the talks.

Earlier, PAS had stipulated three conditions for the talks. They are restoring oil royalty payment to PAS-led Terengganu, its official organ "Harakah" be allowed to publish twice weekly instead of fortnightly at present and to shelve plans to ban the word "Islam" being used in the name of political parties.

Rafidah, who is International Trade and Industry Minister, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had explained that the talks were to discuss the Malay special rights, Islam as the official religion, Bahasa Malaysia as the national language and the position of the Malay Rulers.

"These are important issues that need to be defended and protected so that there'll be no attempts in future to erode them," she said.

She said there were also other issues that need to be discussed among the Malays for the overall interests of the country.

Clearly disappointed with PAS' attitude, Rafidah urged its leaders to be more serious and committed towards realising the unity talks.

"By imposing too many conditions, PAS is not showing its willingness to protect the Malay rights and discuss the interests of the Malay race.

"Maybe PAS is not at all bothered about the Malay special rights and privileges in the country," she added.

-- BERNAMA

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