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Umno/PAS-Approach

UMNO-PAS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING AGREES ON NEW APPROACHES

KUALA LUMPUR, April 2 (Bernama) -- The third Umno-PAS technical committee meeting today to prepare for inter-party talks on Malay unity has agreed on several new approaches to see that the discourse materialises.

Datuk Zainuddin Maidin, the Umno spokesman for the 90-minute meeting held at Carcosa Seri Negara, however declined to elaborate.

"... new approaches have been adopted to ensure a fruitful meeting between the leadership of both parties," said Zainuddin, who is Information Ministry Parliamentary Secretary.

Umno's delegation to the meeting comprised secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, executive secretary Tengku Datuk Adnan Mansor and the Prime Minister's Political Secretary Datuk Dasuki Ahmad.

Besides Zainuddin, former Terengganu PAS deputy chief Ghazali Ahmad and Umno headquarters administrative manager Abu Khamis also attended the meeting.

PAS was represented by secretary-general Nasharuddin Mat Isa, central working committee member Dr Mohamed Hatta Ramli, Pahang PAS liaison secretary Dr Abdul Wahab Ismail, the MP for Kuala Terengganu Dr Syed Azman Ahmad Nawawi, party research centre director Dr Zulkifli Ahmad and managing director of Harakah, its official organ, Datuk Hishamuddin Yahya.

The third meeting, originally slated for March 27, was postponed at PAS's request after Nasharuddin informed Khalil that several of its technical committee members could not attend then.

Both parties agreed to meet for the next round for which the date has not been fixed yet and according to Zainuddin, both sides agreed today that any arising problems could be dealt with by leaders of the respective parties.

"We foresee that the leadership could resolve arising problems," he said, adding that the meeting started at 2.30 pm on a positive note with PAS displaying responsibility of wanting to realise the proposed Malay unity talks.

The meeting did not discuss the so-called "Amanat Haji Hadi" or the decree of Hadi Awang (PAS deputy president), oil royalty payment to Terengganu and the publication of Harakah.

"We skip discussing matters that will only create more problems but instead talked about solving problems and narrowing down problematic issues," he said.

Meanwhile, Nasharuddin said today's meeting brought about positive results although PAS still retained its pre-conditions relating to reinstatement of oil royalty payment to Terengganu and publication of Harakah before talks on Malay unity could begin.

"We still maintain the status quo of what should be returned to PAS," he said.

Last December several quarters called for a discourse on Malay unity and Umno responded by inviting PAS and Parti Keadilan Nasional to the proposed talks.

Keadilan turned down the invitation but while PAS accepted it insisted that they discuss national unity and not limited to only Malay unity and PAS in turn suggested that the judicial system, democracy, the economy and Islam be on the agenda as well.

PAS also set pre-conditions namely the reinstatement of oil royalty payment to the Terengganu state and reallowing bi-weekly publication of

Harakah.

Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said that Umno wanted to discuss matters relating to Malay special rights, the position of Islam, the national language and the status of the Malay Rulers.

-- BERNAMA

MHI AHH NMO RYN