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Wanita leaders want unity talks to take place soon

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Pas must realise that the proposed unity talks with Umno are for the benefit of the Malays and not for any particular political party or individual.

As such, the Opposition party has been urged to work towards making the talks a reality.

Wanita Umno executive council member Mastika Junaidah Husin expressed hope that the Pas leadership would not be easily manipulated by certain quarters who opposed the talks.

She said if Pas was sincere in its struggle for the Malays and Muslims, it must drop all the pre-conditions and be willing to attend the talks as soon as possible.

"Umno has shown its sincerity by inviting Pas to the talks without setting any condition or limit on the issues to be discussed. I think Pas should act like-wise.

"If one party starts setting pre-conditions it will create a counter effect and in the end it will be another fruitless attempt to unite the Malays," Mastika said.

Wanita exco member Senator Datuk Hazizah Mohd Sultan, meanwhile, urged Pas to adopt an "open mind" approach for the sake of the Malays.

"If it could pack all its grievances and the points of its fiery anti-Umno ceramah nationwide and unfold them during the talks, it would at least clear certain misunderstandings.

"But if these matters are laid out as pre-conditions for the talks then the community as a whole will lose an opportunity to enhance unity," Hazizah said.

The Malay unity talks, originally scheduled to be held on Monday, was called off after Pas withdrew at the last minute.

Pas president Datuk Fadzil Noor, after the party's central working committee meeting, cited several unconvincing developments, saying that Umno had failed to show its sincerity in holding the talks.

Fadzil, however, stressed that the technical committees of both parties must continue their meeting to sort out demands and find amicable solutions.

The Umno political bureau, chaired by party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, had also directed its technical committee to conduct a thorough study on the opposition party's pre-conditions.

Younger generation leaders, meanwhile, have urged Pas to avoid being turned into a puppet by those who had earlier refused to be part of the unity talks.

Umno Youth information chief Azimi Daim voiced his disappointment over Pas Youth's tendency to toe Parti Keadilan Nasional's line on the talks. In a statement today, Azimi urged the opposition party's Youth wing to avoid being a stumbling block to the talks.

He alleged that Keadilan was now trying all out to stop the unity talks from taking place and had advised Pas Youth leaders and its members not to be a tool for manipulators.

Umno supreme council member Azalina Othman Said expressed optimism that the unity talks would materialise, but advised Pas to practise what it often preached.

She said in the true spirit of Islam both parties must get down to the discussion table to iron out whatever differences and grievances they

might have.

"They should put all differences and personal feelings aside and attend the talks for the sake of Malay unity," she said.

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