

# Fadzil set to explain pact with Umno

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KUALA LUMPUR: PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor is expected to defend the PAS-Umno unity pact on the Palestine issue at the party's upcoming *muktamar* (assembly) early next month.

This follows criticism from within the party that PAS should not have been a part of the pact, made at a public forum on the issue organised by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka last week.

A political comment in the latest issue of the party's newsletter, *Harakah*, had also criticised Fadzil for sharing the same platform with Umno president and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the forum.

The article said Fadzil and other PAS leaders should not have given up their principles and sat down with those who did not share their beliefs. The writer stated that the PAS leaders should have walked out of the forum.

The PAS assembly, to be held from May 31 to June 2 in Kota Baru would provide Fadzil an opportunity to explain to party members whether or not he made the decision unilaterally or with the consent of the

central working committee.

The PAS president had also been criticised for presenting a "pseudo-intellectual" performance against the more practical approach of Dr Mahathir. On the two leaders, the *Harakah* writer said "one gave a history lesson on Palestine (referring to Fadzil) while the other (Dr Mahathir) launched a psychological warfare on Muslims on behalf of US President George W. Bush.

PAS information chief Azizan Abdul Razak said Fadzil would have the chance to defend his stand.

He said some members complained that Fadzil did not inform the committee that the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement and Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka had invited the party to the forum.

"I strongly deny this (allegation) because Fadzil did inform the committee of the event. This is a serious allegation and I am looking into this."

Azizan said PAS made a unanimous decision to take part in the forum so that members and non-Muslims could understand the PAS' stand.

"The 50-minutes opportuni-

ty gave PAS a chance to explain to members about what should be done in the first place," he added.

He said PAS was instructed by the organisers to stick to the real issues and to skip anything involving politics.

"This is what the president did and we stayed within our boundary but Dr Mahathir turned it into a political issue."

However, he said, what was most important was that PAS had achieved what it had set out to do at the forum.

"We are able to show that we are not afraid of Umno and could meet them anywhere."

Azizan said he believed that Fadzil would want to explain to party members about the purpose of the forum from his perspective as a leader.

"I am sure he would do this at the *muktamar*."

Sources said that several PAS leaders were unhappy with Fadzil because he failed to bring up the meeting with Dr Mahathir before the committee.

"We feel that Fadzil should not represent PAS at the *muktamar* because it was obvious the talks was held for Umno's advantage."