

No need to explain stand, says

Fadzil

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By FARID JAMALUDIN

PETALING JAYA: PAS president Datuk Fadzil Nor, criticised for his role at the public forum on the Palestinian issue early this month, said there was no need for him to explain his stand unless party members want him to.

"It is the *muktamar* next week which is my main concern," he said in his first statement since being discharged from the Kuala Terengganu Hospital where he was admitted for fatigue two weeks ago.

Fadzil has taken a lot of flak for his part in the unity pact with Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the "Palestine and Humanity" forum organised by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka and the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement on May 8.

Although his party members felt that his performance was creditable compared with Dr Mahathir's opinions on the issue, they were not happy that their president shared the same platform as the Prime Minister.

A political commentator writing in the party's newsletter *Harakah* said the forum was a "sham" as Fadzil just gave a history lesson on the Palestinians while Dr Mahathir launched a psychological war on the Muslims on behalf of US President George W. Bush.

Umno members, on the other hand, gave Dr Mahathir high ratings over his PAS counterpart and said the forum had opened up the people's hearts and minds over the Palestinian issue.

Responding to the criticisms against him, Fadzil said: "As far as I am concerned, I think PAS had been able to let the feelings of the *rakyat* known on the issue. I don't care about what Umno felt."

He said the Palestinian issue had been there for more than 50 years, yet none of the Islamic nations could contribute anything towards resolving it.