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Zainudin-PAS

PAS HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNDER FOREIGN ELEMENTS' INFLUENCE, SAYS ZAM

KOTA BAHARU, Feb 8 (Bernama) -- PAS has always been under the influence of foreign elements since its inception, Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainudin Maidin said today.

He said the latest proof was the report on the party's acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang attending a meeting of Islamic radicals in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, in October 2000.

He said PAS had been a tool to the country's enemy in the post-independence era when the party wanted to make Malaysia as part of Indonesia.

The party was also influenced by the Islamic Revolution in Iran during the Ayatollah Khomeini era, he said.

"The latest development that shocked the people is the revelation that Hadi attended a meeting of Islamic radical groups in Makassar, South Sulawesi," he told reporters, here.

The Star reported yesterday that Hadi was at the meeting, which was also attended by radical Muslim leaders such as Abubakar Ba'asyir, who heads the Jemaah Islamiah with links to al-Qaeda and is now being detained in Jakarta, and Agus Dwikarna, who led the militant Laskar Jundullah.

Agus, who is now serving a 17-year prison term in the Philippines for possession of explosives and suspected involvement in bombings in Jakarta and Manila.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said in Langkawi today that the government would investigate the news report which claimed that Hadi attended a meeting of Muslim radical groups in Makassar.

Zainudin said PAS leaders would never admit the actions of their party but would instead accuse Umno and the federal government of betraying the country.

"They (PAS) are now saying that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is the stooge of the United States after the Prime Minister has been acknowledged and recognised by the Al-Azhar University and Saudi Arabia as the voice of Islam... including for criticising America," he said.

Zainudin is in Kelantan since yesterday to attend the Chinese New Year open house jointly hosted by the State Barisan Nasional and Kota Baharu Umno division.

In his speech, he urged the Chinese community in Kelantan not to be taken in by the promises of PAS leaders as the party never had a firm stand.

In the next general election, PAS and DAP would continue to co-operate through Parti Keadilan Nasional (Keadilan), he added.

-- BERNAMA

RAR RON TS