

Boycott Ijok? PAS leaders at odds
Malaysiakini.com
April 16, 2007
Muda Mohd Noor

Contradictory stands are being made by PAS leaders over the upcoming Ijok by-election in Selangor.

Yesterday, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang said the party was still adhering to its decision to boycott elections as a form of protest against the purported failure of the Election Commission (EC) to institute reforms.

However, his deputy Nasharuddin Mat Isa said earlier that the party will support Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) which has decided to vie for the Ijok seat.

PAS Selangor chief Dr Hassan Ali, who is also vice-president, had also expressed support for PKR, but under one condition - that the party fields its treasurer Khalid Ibrahim.

Meanwhile, PAS Youth chief Salahuddin Ayub had stated that the Youth wing will boycott the contest.

PAS and PKR are members of the Barisan Alternatif (BA) opposition coalition. The Ijok state seat fell vacant following the death of MIC incumbent K Sivalingam on April 4. Polling is on April 28.

No reforms

Speaking after a meeting at the PAS headquarters in Kuala Lumpur last night, Hadi pointed out that PAS boycotted the by-elections for Batu Talam in Pahang and last week's Machap in Malacca.

In view of this, he said the party must discuss with PKR, which also boycotted January's Batu Talam contest, on whether it will assist or continue the boycott for Ijok.

"Until today, EC has not carried out the reforms demanded by PAS to ensure free and fair elections," he said.

This, he added, included press freedom and the eradication of money politics during the campaign period.

Hadi said PAS will also find out more about the rationale behind PKR's decision to field a candidate in Ijok.

The opposition leader was also asked to comment on Salahuddin's boycott announcement, to which he replied: "Any wing can voice its views and suggestions but the final decision is made by the central leadership."