

## **'Umno offered 3 ministers' posts to form unity gov't'**

**Malaysiakini.com**

**May 29, 2011**

PAS has again alleged that Umno had recently approached spiritual adviser Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, up to five times and with an offer of three ministerial posts, to persuade the Islamic party to form a unity government with BN.

According to the PAS' Pasir Puteh MP Muhammad Husain, Nik Aziz revealed these latest overtures at a gathering of the Kelantan diaspora in Dengkil, Selangor.

"Yes, it is true. He said Umno and PAS negotiated there were five meetings. It happened recently. It was related to cooperation between PAS and Umno," said Muhammad Husain, who was at the gathering.

He also claimed that the Nik Aziz, who is Kelantan menteri besar, had told the gathering that PAS had been offered three ministerial posts if it agrees to form a joint government with BN.

Nik Aziz, a respected Islamic scholar, has been a vocal critic of cooperation with Umno, constantly reminding members and leaders about PAS' bad experience in having formed an alliance with Umno in the 1970s.

The idea of forming an unity government with Umno has been raised at almost all party polls in recent years although delegates had rejected the proposal at the 2008 Muktamar (annual assembly).

According to Muhammad, Nik Aziz had downright rejected the latest deal as PAS already has a pact with DAP and PKR under Pakatan Rakyat.

He said Nik Aziz told the gathering that Umno had been attempting to convince PAS since April last year when Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak was toying with the idea of both Malay-centric parties working together.

### **Shock at Nik Aziz's revelation**

Muhammad said the gathering attracted about 500 people, including PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution and parliamentarians Abdul Aziz Abdul Kadir (PKR-Ketereh), Abdullah Sani (PKR-Kuala Langat).

This was confirmed by others who were at the high-tea event, and who also expressed shock at Nik Aziz's revelation.

In a related development, a few sources who also attended the tea party confirmed Nik Aziz's speech and some of them also felt shocked by the revelation.

A well-placed source admitted that the meetings, including at the PAS elder's own house in Pulau Melaka, had been going on since early this year.

However, the source could not confirm the details about the time and the date of the meeting.

Nik Aziz is one of the leaders in PAS who has been most vocal in admonishing the plan for PAS-Umno unity since the issue was first raised in 2008.

Nik Aziz even suggested for a special party Muktamar to be held to weed out certain leaders in PAS who are said to be supporting the idea.

However, in January, Nik Aziz attended a function with the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong and the prime

minister, which gave rise to speculation that he is also involved in the talks.

Nik Aziz, however, responded saying that the political turmoil should not involve the Istana as it was only a dinner.

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