

## **Nik Aziz: PAS ready to face 'all stripes' of secularists**

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PAS spiritual leader Nik Aziz Nik Mat today used his first speech at the party's annual assembly, the Muktamar, to reiterate the Islamic party's stand against secularism.

In the speech to officially open the women's wing, Muslimat, at Shah Alam today, he said the party challenges those who subscribe to such beliefs regardless of their political stance or ideology.

"I am stressing that PAS can face any sort of 'mental colonisation' and the spread of secularism in all sorts of colours, be it blue or red.

"Whatever the colour may be, it is still jahiliyah (ignorant and barbaric) thought and must be rejected," he said.

Although an Islamic party, PAS is a member of the Pakatan Rakyat alongside PKR and the DAP, both of which have secular party constitutions, with the latter constantly stressing this identity.

The coalition, however, recognises that Islam is the religion of the federation, as stated in the federal constitution.

PAS' previous calls for an Islamic state, which they have since rebranded as a 'welfare state', have been severely challenged by DAP.

In his speech, Nik Aziz (left) reiterated that the struggle of PAS is based on the belief that everything in the world belongs to Allah, and that we must follow the rules laid down in the Quran and hadith.

Speaking to reporters later, he said that among those who have rejected these rules is Umno.

"We are against Malays who reject Islam, whose name is Umno," he said, also chiding the ruling coalition anchor party for opting to use their English acronym despite claiming to be Malay champions.

In his speech, Nik Aziz also said PAS' role is to be a "sift" to filter through the many ideologies and teachings to lead people to the path of righteousness, as it bases its struggle on the Quran.

"Our struggle in PAS is an act of worship... and will be rewarded by Allah, if He is willing.

"Although the democratic space is shrinking, but our struggle to liberate Muslims from the trappings of modern jahiliyah must be based on the teachings of Islam and must be continued at all costs," he said.

### **Buck up for GE**

Meanwhile, in her keynote speech, incumbent PAS Muslimat chief Nuridah Salleh made a clarion call for the next general election, which factions within PAS expect to be called as early as next month.

She said that PAS' string of defeats in by-elections and failure to obtain a single seat in the recent Sarawak polls is a message from God that "there is no magic shortcut to win a battle".

"There is no way we can convince voters who don't know anything about PAS' struggle in the eight to 10 days of campaign, what more with the slander campaign led by Umno and BN, who have no qualms in using state machinery to their advantage," she said.

In her strongly worded speech, Nuridah (left in picture) also slammed party workers who join the campaign only to "flock in operation rooms but do not meet voters".

Among others, she said the way to Putrajaya requires PAS members to strengthen their ties with its Pakatan Rakyat partners and other friends including the PAS Supporters' Club and PSM.

“We need to explain PAS's ambitions - PAS for all, and to explain the what Pakatan has to offer through the Buku Jingga... PAS can only replace Umno if we have the commitment and the spirit of jihad,” she said.

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