

Hadi: Meet my general election team
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PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang today said that the newly-elected leadership was chosen to spearhead the Islamic party's 13th general election campaign.

Addressing reporters after the results of the polls were announced at the muktamar in Kuala Lumpur, Abdul Hadi said that the various backgrounds of the new line-up can meet this challenge.

"Look at the central working committee. There are engineers, grassroots leaders, a few ulama, look at the collective and not the individuals... The leaders selected have been on the front lines in preparation for election. This is my election cabinet," he said.

He added that the line-up shows the wisdom of the delegates, who appear to have chosen professionals to fill the top leadership after seeing that the ulama, women and youth wings are led by those from the ulama ranks.

Ulama council chief Harun Taib and youth wing chief Nasrudin Hasan were returned to their posts uncontested, while Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff won in the contest for Muslimat chief.

Abdul Hadi also insisted that the election of those considered to be more progressive in the party does not mean that the party will abandon its fundamentals.

"Our policies remain but the strategy has changed. In fact it is not the leadership who chose to make this change but the delegates who made their choices... it is normal to change strategies according to the needs at the time," he said.

He added that it is not impossible for a non-ulama to be elected as president if it fits the circumstances of the time, as the party constitution does not have such a restriction in that sense.

"We have had doctors and state secretaries leading ulama in the past. We need people who understand the challenges of the time. (Today) society is influenced by civil society movements, and (new deputy president) Mohamad Sabu is active in NGOs..." he said.

Abdul Hadi said that what should be the focus was the fact that the party election took place without incident, unlike in other parties.

'No flying chairs'

"There were no flying chairs, no sulking, no money politics, none of them existed and that is our strength," he said of the calm and collected affair which took place despite it being the most hotly-contested PAS polls to date.

Grassroots leader Mohamad today ousted ulama Nasharudin Mat Isa as deputy president, and is joined in the leadership council by Kelantan senior exco member Husam Musa who was elected vice-president alongside incumbents Mahfuz Omar and Salahuddin Ayub, both not from religious backgrounds.

About half of the central working committee elected are also not from the ulama ranks, in what pundits see as a take over by the professional faction.