

PAS' divorce oath stymied Perak unity gov't
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PAS had refused to form a unity government with Umno in Perak back in 2008 because its state assemblypersons had sworn a religious oath to divorce their wives if they defected.

At the Umno general assembly today, Perak delegate Saarani Mohamad claimed that efforts to form a Malay-Muslim governing coalition was stymied because of the oath, known as the baiah.

At the time, Umno had 27 seats while MCA had one. PAS had six seats, which was enough to help BN form a government with a simple majority in the 59 seat state legislative assembly.

"However, when we approached PAS we were told by them that they had made a baiah, that if they join BN they would have to divorce their wives," he said.

Hence, he said PAS is willing to make such a controversial oath and forsaken Malay and Muslim unity.

Saarani said compared to Umno, what we require is an allegiance to the party and BN.

"We will not make such baiah as it is not in Umno's culture to do that. It is sufficient we have allegiance to the party," he said.

Eventually, three Pakatan Rakyat state assemblypersons - two from PKR and one from DAP - quit their respective parties in February 2009 and declared allegiance to BN, helping the latter form the new Perak state government.

Dr M-Pak Lah reconciliation call

Meanwhile, another delegate called on the party to bring two former party presidents Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Abdullah Ahmad Badawi together make the party stronger.

"They should sit together and then we could register a big victory. We could then credit our leader Najib Abdul Razak," said Federal Territory delegate Syed Ali Syed Abbas Alhabshee.

Mahathir had been publicly criticising Abdullah, his handpicked successor, beginning in 2006 over a series of policy decision.

At the height of the conflict, Mahathir went on roadshows against Abdullah and eventually resigned from Umno in protest.

Syed Ali said the episode had left Umno scarred and party president Najib Abdul Razak had been working hard to mend ties.

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