

'Mainstream media gives me more space than Harakah'

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PAS' Selangor exco Hasan Ali has hit out at *Harakah*, saying that the mainstream media had been more forthcoming in giving him coverage than his own party organ.

"If you do a content analysis of *Harakah's* online and print version, how much space have I received? Even during my time as Selangor PAS commissioner, how much did I get?

"Sometimes I see it giving space to Pakatan Rakyat component parties rather than our own party members," said Hasan at a press conference at his residence in Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Petaling Jaya.

Hasan, who had recently been interviewed by Umno-linked media *TV3* and *Berita Minggu*, was responding to calls by PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat's not to use "BN media" to avoid giving the ruling coalition ammunition against PAS.

However, he dismissed "Umno media" as merely a term, reiterating that he has been open to all media regardless of ownership.

"For me, there is no such thing as Umno media. It just happens that it is controlled by the government and Umno is part of that government, so we call it Umno media.

"But I accept any media, be within local or foreign, small or big, printed or electronic, I do not ask for their affiliation."

He added that by engaging with the mainstream media, he was able to explain his recent spat with some PAS leaders to a wider audience instead of only to party members through *Harakah* which has limited his coverage.

'Harakah favours selected groups'

Giving an example, Hasan said *Harakah* had an extensive interview with PAS deputy spiritual leader Haron Din about the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) controversy at the latter's request.

"You would expect that the deputy spiritual leader would get precedence in the party's organ, but due to orders from those controlling the party's media, to date, the interview has not been published.

"If the deputy spiritual leader's interview is not published, I'm just a small fry compared to Haron."

Harakah, Hasan says, has been dominated by people whom favoured a particular group within PAS, some of whom had helmed the party organ for over 20 years.

"I am not denying the contributions of *Harakah*, they have played an important role for Islam in Malaysia... but it's time to relook at *Harakah* in terms of organisation and function."

However, Hasan said he has agreed with the party's leadership's advice to "space out" his comments to the media and would only call press conferences when critical issues needed to be addressed.

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