

Dzulkefly slams Mahathir on non-Muslim VP comment
MalaysiaKini.com
March 2,2012

PAS research head Dzulkefly Ahmad has hit out at former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad for "distorting" his comment that the Islamist party is prepared to embrace a non-Muslim for a senior post in the party.

"I am not surprised Mahathir distorted my statement, to very impolitely propose that Lim Kit Siang becomes the president of PAS, when Mahathir can even twist the Al-Quran, saying it does not contain hudud and that hudud is unjust," said Dzulkefly, in a blog posing yesterday.

"I suggest Mahathir concentrates on explaining allegations on how US\$100 billion (RM330 billion) disappeared as a result of leakages and corruption in the government's financial management," he said.

The Kuala Selangor MP has also come under fire for the comment from party leaders - including vice-president Mahfuz Omar, Ulama council chief Harun Taib and Youth chief Nasrudin Hassan - who criticised the his statement as causing anxiety among the Malay Muslim majority.

At a forum on Tuesday, Dzulkefly was asked whether the PAS would be open to the idea of accepting a non-Muslims into its ranks, just as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) did last year by appointing Coptic thinker Rafiq Habib as a vice-president.

Dzulkefly also expressed regret over the comments of some of the PAS leaders who also demanded that he retracts the comment.

'A framework for the future'

"What comment, may I ask? I've been asked to write a concise and clear statement. Hopefully everyone can understand," he said and reproduced the entire transcript of the press conference after the forum.

He clarified that his opinion was based on the framework for the future, drawing an example, he said, of the PAS Supporters Club, which existed in the past, but does now.

"I can imagine one day when the party expands until a constitutional amendment is proposed to the PAS general assembly to appoint a non-Muslim as a vice-president. It is a very reasonable projection... maybe in a decade or two," said Dzulkefly.

"I'm clear on the Ulama council's stand and the muktamar... but there is ample space in the administration, organisation and approaches that must often undergo renewal through the proper channels and methods," he added.

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