

'No unity gov't as Umno shuns good governance'

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By Hazlan Zakaria

Newly-elected PAS Kuala Terengganu parliamentarian Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah Raja Ahmad believe that there is no chance of a PAS-Umno tie-up as the Malay party continue to ignore good governance.

"For PAS and Umno to unite, there must be a common meeting point.

"But we don't see that," he argued at a Malay daily Sinar Harian-organised forum on 'The direction of Malay Politics post-GE13'.

To him, Umno's lack of good governance in practice makes it unsuitable for a tie-up with PAS, as good governance is one of the principles that is core to the Islamic party's philosophy.

"Other than just religious matters, worldly affairs, especially good governance, is also part of the new developments in PAS," he said.

He said he observed this in his 20 years as a PAS member, how the newer leaders are pressing for good governance.

His years of living in Terengganu, he said, had also shown him the lack of regard that the Umno-led BN has for good governance.

"It has come to a point that they call Terengganu darul runtuh. I am ashamed to say this, but it is a fact."

He related how the Umno controlled state government, though cash-rich, had mismanaged projects that saw public buildings collapsing and full of defects.

Former federal minister and Umno supreme council member Saifuddin Abdullah, a fellow panelist at the discourse, also saw no reason why a PAS-Umno unity government is being touted as the ultimate way to unite Malays.

"There are other ways for Malays to unite," he argued.

Furthermore, Saifuddin contends that being members of different political parties does not denote disunity, but rather just healthy competition and constructive difference of viewpoints.

DAP's Zairil Khir Johari, newly elected to the Bukit Bendera parliamentary seat and rounding up the discussion panel, added his view that Malays should not be threatened by a racially inclusive atmosphere as "there is no way that Malay power is going to be lost in Malaysia".

"First of all it is demographics, we form the largest population group and our numbers are rising. Secondly our rights are guaranteed in the constitution which no one including the DAP is challenging. Thirdly we have the Malay rulers who shall protect and preserve Malay traditions," reasoned Zairil.

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