

PSM to meet PAS next week to iron out issues

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By Ram Anand

Leaders from Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) will be meeting with PAS leaders next week at the latter's headquarters for a "dialogue" in which PSM will raise issues about PAS' stand on party's socialist ideologies, along with other problems that had cropped up during the May 5 general election.

NONEPSM secretary-general S Arutchelvan (left) told Malaysiakini in an interview yesterday that PSM had written to PAS to have a proper dialogue in order to seek explanations regarding PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's remarks shortly after nomination day, in which he appeared to link PSM to "Marxism".

"We had received a phone call two days ago (about the dialogue), though we have not finalised the date and the people who will be involved. About five of the PSM's top leadership will be there," Arutchelvan noted.

He said the issue of the three-corner fight in the Kota Damansara state seat - due to a PAS candidate surprisingly filing in his nomination papers - and the altercation in which PAS' Unit Amal members attempted to block PSM supporters, including Arutchelvan, from filing his nomination papers for the Semenyih state seat, will also be raised.

Arutchelvan also questioned the wisdom of several PAS leaders criticising the PSM ideology just before the elections.

"Is it a question of our ideology or is it an issue about seats, about them contesting Kota Damansara?" he asked.

"If ideology was an issue, it should have been raised long ago - all along PAS and PSM have worked well with each other. Why was the issue raised so close to the elections?" Arutchelvan added.

PSM wants clarification from PAS

He also said that PAS itself has members who are very supportive of PSM and its ideologies, whereas there exists a group within the party which sees PSM as an "enemy".

azlan"One group is very pro-socialism, while the other is seeing us as an enemy.

"They should clarify on this matter because otherwise, PAS' argument will become the same like BN's argument in attacking PSM and calling us communists. We don't see what we have done that has made them have issues with us," he lamented.

Arutchelvan also said that he had been disappointed with the lack of speed in resolving the three-corner fight in Kota Damansara.

"There had been seven seats which were overlapping - six seats were resolved quite fast, but Kota Damansara took a few days (for PKR and PAS) to resolve; we are quite disappointed with that," he added.

PAS eventually ordered its candidate Ridzuan Ismail to withdraw from the contest, but the party machinery on the ground continued to campaign for the seat.

Ridzuan pulled 7,312 votes, causing PSM's Dr Nasir Hashim - who contested under the PKR banner - to lose the seat by a 1,527-vote majority to BN's Halimatun Saadiah.

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