

Youth, religion, unclear in PM's national reconciliation

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Issues on religion and youth should be included as topics in the national reconciliation programme announced by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, PAS Youth chief Suhaizan Kaiat said today.

While Najib outlined four areas covering social, politics, government and international relations, there is no clear agenda on the issues of religion and youth, Suhaizan noted.

"PAS Youth emphasises that Malaysian youth are bored with the political polemics that is unfinished. They want to see more harmony in the national reconciliation towards producing peace and prosperity in the country," he said.

Suhaizan (left) said agenda for the youth is important in the national reconciliation programme as they are faced with issues of unemployment, education, the rising costs of living and housing, and others. The youth account for 40 to 50 percent of the voters.

"Not putting up an agenda for the youth will create a gap and they will be sidelined from the country's development due to the failure of this agenda," he said.

The religious agenda is also important to resolve the present issues faced by the country, including the use of the word Allah, and religious hatred that is spreading and is dangerous.

A parliamentary caucus must be formed

There are also those who play to sensitive tones to reap political benefit, Suhaizan added.

To ensure success, he said, PAS Youth proposes that a parliamentary caucus be formed to resolve the outstanding problems.

"All main issues should be discussed in the parliamentary caucus. Besides this, the national reconciliation agenda should also include the state government and local councils.

"Representatives of political parties and non-governmental organisations should also be given the chance to be involved in developing the country, states and districts," he said

As to the sincerity of Najib's national reconciliation initiative, Suhaizan said young Malaysians would want it to be manifested in the Kajang by-election, where the politics of slander, corruption, hatred, religious sentiments, racism and injustice are not raised.

"It should be replaced with a new politics that leads to harmony," he said.

There have been several calls for national reconciliation/consensus.

Yesterday, Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim also espoused the need for bi-partisan discussions on the pressing problems affecting the country's economy and religion.

DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang has also called for the formation of a secretariat to discuss these issues.

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