

PAS: To mend rift, respect our right to reject Azizah
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If the right of PAS and the Selangor palace to reject PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as the next menteri besar is respected, the rift in the opposition bloc will be bridged, claims a PAS leader.

"If Pakatan Rakyat respects this right, the situation may return to how it was before," said PAS central committee member Nik Abduh Nik Aziz (right).

Elaborating on his vitriolic salvo on PKR earlier, Nik Abduh denied that it was a call for PAS to leave the Pakatan coalition.

"I am not thinking about quitting Pakatan... That is still out of consideration," he told Malaysiakini.

Nik Abduh, who is the son of PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, was also asked to comment on his statement that PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang decided there was no need to discuss with PKR or DAP any longer.

"No (it doesn't mean leaving Pakatan). It means that the move to submit a PAS name (for the menteri besar post) was done without meetings with Pakatan or the PAS central committee.

"The president acted on his own.

"To me, it is a signal that he (Hadi) regrets the action of PKR with regard to handling this problem," he added.

In defence of his president, who has come under intense criticism, Nik Abduh issued a statement saying that Hadi was betrayed by PAS members and Pakatan allies.

Talk of a deal with Umno

The situation in PAS turned murkier when certain pro-Anwar Ibrahim leaders in PKR with links to the pro-Pakatan forces in PAS were said to have spread word that Hadi and his men were engineering a deal with Umno.

This came after reports that Hadi had told a PAS central committee meeting on Aug 25 that he had offered PKR deputy president Azmin Ali the post of Selangor menteri besar in the wake of an unity government with Umno.

Although Hadi's camp denied this, a check by Malaysiakini revealed that there was basis to

the claim that the PAS president had raised the issue.

On Sept 2, PAS vice-president Husam Musa dropped another bombshell when he announced that some top PAS leaders held a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's faction in Umno to broker a deal.

These issues intensified the attacks against the pro-ulama faction in PAS, and the powerful clerics were red faced and peeved.

The imbroglio had then led to the speculation that newly-formed NGO Persatuan Ummah Sejahtera Malaysia (PasMa) would be transformed into a political party to replace PAS in Pakatan.

Don't lead PAS by the nose

In a related development, former PAS information chief Subky Latif also stressed on the importance of PAS being given adequate respect and an equal role in Pakatan.

Subky said though the issue of PAS leaving Pakatan does not arise, the party, however, would not be led by the nose.

Taking a swipe at PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu, Subky said since PAS was not considering leaving Pakatan, there was no need for the former to run around telling party members about the importance of the opposition bloc.

The Harakah columnist, whose writings are influential in his party circles, also recalled that when Barisan Alternatif was formed, it was DAP that quit the alliance, not PAS.

"We admit that Pakatan is facing a difficult test, but the issue of PAS wanting to leave the coalition, or that it intends to break it up, does not arise.

"Crisis and differences, when cannot be avoided, must be faced and handled well.

"We did not make a pact to have differences, but differences can crop up anytime.

"This is what you call a test, and humans face tests all the time," Subky (right) wrote in a recent column.

He also said it was not only PAS leaders who wanted Pakatan, but also the party's grassroots members.

"If not, PAS members will not ask (DAP leaders) Lim Kit Siang and Lim Guan Eng to speak at their places, where there are only a handful of Chinese," he added.

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