

PAS says it's not joining Umno, but 'working together'

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Following the conclusion of Umno's AGM yesterday and talk of solidifying ties with former arch enemy PAS, the latter has denied it is joining the ruling party.

"Will PAS join with Umno? Will PAS enter Umno? Will PAS cooperate with Umno?"

"These terms must be explained to the public," said PAS information chief Nasrudin Hassan in a statement today.

While he did not provide a definitive answer to the question, he reiterated the party's syura council decision that PAS will not combine with Umno, and would not join BN, but would "cooperate with any party for the sake of Islam and Muslims".

Hence, he said, the notion of PAS and Umno combining was an "impossibility" in light of the syura council decision.

Elaborating at length on the semantics of "join", "combine" and "cooperate", Nasrudin concluded PAS would continue to "advise" the ruling party and reject any form of politics that creates "hatred" among Muslims.

"PAS and Umno need to combine so that Malaysia's politics remains healthy with checks and balances.

"In fact, PAS will continue to give constructive criticism towards the Umno government, so that there is no abuse, corruption or oppression of the people.

"However it does not mean PAS, Umno and others must continue to fight on all matters to the detriment of the Muslim community.

"To the point of creating hatred amongst Muslims, fighting among neighbours because of differing parties, conflict between husband and wife because of different (party) flags.

"This situation would be beneficial to PAS' mission," he said.

'Partners must accept PAS'

Acknowledging that the country was approaching general election season, Nasrudin made a veiled reference to talk among the opposition of engaging PAS in straight fights with BN with the Islamist party's standard reply.

"As long as obstacles (mentioned earlier concerning Muslim unity) is removed, PAS can meet with all quarters who are ready to accept PAS' participation and who do not oppose our struggle," he said.

During last week's Umno AGM, the demonisation of DAP as an [anti-Islam](#) party was a central theme.

During the proceedings, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak also announced the government will "[take over](#)" PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's bill to amend the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965.

Last year, PAS initiated the break up of Pakatan Harapan when it decided to cut ties with DAP over the latter's objection to the implementation of hudud.

Hadi's bill was tabled to remove the final obstacle to Kelantan's hudud laws, which were unanimously passed at the state assembly comprising a majority of PAS and Umno assemblypersons.

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