

DPM welcomes initiatives to unite Malays, Muslims
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Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin said today he welcomed any initiative by individuals or groups to facilitate unity among the Malays and Muslims and in playing the mediatory role between Umno and PAS.

NONThe deputy prime minister said although Umno itself was set up to unite the Malays and Muslims, he appreciated any move to further facilitate the process.

"It doesn't matter if they are mufti or former mufti, I think they have a role to play.

"The same goes to others, including the Malay or Muslim Bumiputera leaders, if they want to come forward and facilitate the process, I think we should welcome them," he told reporters after opening the Sepanggar Umno division meeting here today.

Muhyiddin was asked to comment on the statement by Perak Mufti Harussani Zakaria yesterday that several Umno and PAS leaders had come to see him recently to seek his views on ways to unite the two parties.

Harussani said he told them that he would continue to play the role of a mediator to unite the Muslims and Malays although he realised that several groups were not happy with his initiative.

pas muktamar 130610 nik abdul aziz 4Muhyiddin was also asked to comment on the statement by PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat (right) that he was willing to meet Muhyiddin as long as the discussion was not about PAS and Umno unity.

Muhyiddin said he did not want to comment much about the issue.

"Let it stay that way," he said, "I leave it to the people to interpret because what I say might get misinterpreted."

He nevertheless said that he had stated his views and that Umno president Najib Abdul Razak had also commented about the issue.

"There is no need to respond further because it will end up becoming the subject of debate without achieving anything," he said.

Harussani ZakariaThe deputy prime minister added that the role of mediators might be needed even more now because "if we cannot find a meeting point, then we may need these mediators to facilitate the process."

On the statement by Harussani (right), warning that the Malays might lose their powers in the 13th general election if Umno and PAS refused to cooperate with each other, Muhyiddin said it was better to move quietly to find a solution than to publicise such initiative in the media.

"There is no need for a media debate because it could create wrong impression. If we say certain things, it might get interpreted in certain way.

"But I appreciate his view. It may be because he cares for the Malays and Muslims," he

said.

Earlier in his speech, Muhyiddin said Umno's survival depended on how far the government's transformation programmes benefited the people.

He said Umno's fate would be on the line if party members and leaders were lacking in bringing about changes expected of them within the next two or three years.

"That is why, I call on everyone of us to unite. We can no longer afford to be disunited or be plagued with protracted issues at the grassroots," he said.

- Bernama

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