

Zaid Ibrahim is now Akim president  
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Zaid Ibrahim has been installed as the president of little-known Angkatan Keadilan Insan Malaysia (Akim), less than a month after his acrimonious exit from PKR.

NONETaking over from former president Zakaria Salleh, Zaid was elected unanimously at the party's annual general meeting at the Tropicana Golf Club, Petaling Jaya this morning.

His main agenda is to turn Akim, a Kelantan-based Muslims-only PAS splinter party formed in 1994, into a national multi-racial party that will be renamed Kesejahteraan Insan Tanah Air (Kita).

"On Jan 19, I will call you all to come to Kuala Lumpur again and we will (show) you a new logo, vision and maybe some new people who might want to join our party," he told about 150 party delegates during his winding up and maiden presidential speech.

He said that Akim will officially adopt the name Kita from that day and undertake his many plans for the party.

"On that day, we will also have friends from Sabah and Sarawak joining us," he said.

With Zaid at helm, he said that the party leadership restructure will undergo some restructuring.

"We don't need too many positions like the deputy president or the vice-president. Even each state will consists of divisions," he said.

Among those elected into the central committee are Rashid Azad Khan and Muhammad Firdaus Christopher. Both are Zaid's aides. Rashid Azad is also the treasurer of the party.

Name change to avoid confusion

At a press conference later, Zaid denied that he intends to absorb his supporters from PKR.

"I don't want to steal anyone from PKR. But if they want to join us willingly, of course we will accept them," he said, adding that he is "no one's enemy".

NONEHe was coy and said "yes" with a smile when asked if PKR members had expressed interest in joining his new outfit.

When asked whether Akim will be joining the BN or Pakatan Rakyat coalition, he said that Akim is "an independent and non-partisan party".

"We don't want to join anyone, but if they turn out to really want to support us and their struggles are similar to ours, we'll support them in return," he said.

He also said the reason for the name change is to avoid confusion with PKR.

"PKR already has the word keadilan in it so we'll let them have it. I also don't want people to get confused, wondering if I'm still with PKR and why I'm joining a new party with the

name keadilan," he said with a laugh.

'No need for personalities in Kita'

Zaid left PKR in November, citing disillusionment with the now-concluded party elections.

He was in the race for the deputy presidency against Mohd Azmin Ali and Mustaffa Kamil Ayub before pulling out a week before announcing his resignation from the party. Azmin won the contest, defeating Mustaffa by a huge margin.

Earlier, Zaid peppered his speech with jibes at his former party and colleagues, particularly Anwar Ibrahim, and said his party does not need a stable of famous personalities.

"Even bad people are famous. Even people with scandals are famous," he said.

Zaid also banged the party's war drum, urging delegates to be ready for the upcoming general election.

"We may be small but we have spirit and we are visionaries. Of course the general election will be our benchmark and I promise that we will contest wherever we have a chance of victory.

"People can ask all they want if we are vote spoilers. We are not here to kacau (disturb) but we will be a party that's important to this country and that is my promise."

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