

Mahfuz: Sorry for the lie over PAS-Umno meetings
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PAS information chief Mahfuz Omar today apologised for not telling the truth about the party's meeting with Umno and claimed he received directives from certain top leaders to do so.
MCPX

Mahfuz Omar 01Mahfuz, in his capacity as the party's information chief, had in the past officially denied that PAS had met with Umno to discuss the possibility of jointly ruling Selangor.

However, subsequently Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi revealed that there had been three meetings between the parties, beginning right after the March 8 general election. PAS leaders since then had confirmed the meetings.

"I write this open letter to sincerely apologise to all PAS members and supporters denying that the party had met with Umno. Again I apologise for my misdemeanour," said Mahfuz in a two-page statement issued today.

He stressed that the denial was not made on his personal capacity but was done in his capacity as the party's information chief and based on the instruction given to him by the party leadership.

He added that the blame must not be placed on the shoulders of the party leadership as a whole but on a "few individuals that failed to give the real picture to party leaders".

"Their decision to keep certain issues pertaining to the PAS-Umno meeting in the dark had prompted the party leaders to take the position of perceiving that no meetings between the both parties had taken place," he said.

"Because of these individuals, who had in the name of PAS and without the knowledge of the party central working committee, did not provide detailed information on the matter, the party leadership had instructed me to issue the denial," he added.

Refusing to name anyone

Mahfuz, also the Pokok Sena MP, wants the "few individuals" to come forward and explain to party members and supporters the details of what had transpired in the meetings.

"They must claim responsibility because this had happened due to their indiscretion. I myself was surprised when they (Umno leaders) and PAS president (Hadi Awang) had confirmed that meetings did take place, which was contrary to what I had stated initially," said Mahfuz further.

When contacted, Mahfuz refused to name the responsible persons, saying that it was enough that an open apology has been issued and that the matter will one day "unravel itself".

Immediately after his denial of the meetings, Mahfuz had then received numerous criticism from PAS members, supporters and fellow Pakatan Rakyat members.

"I realised that history will not repeat itself but humans do make mistakes. I urge other PAS leaders to be honest to our members and supporters and to also focus on strengthening our political ties with our fellow Pakatan members," he said.

Mahfuz said he was also ready to face any criticism or punishment by party members following his "accidental mistake".

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