

**Hadi allays PAS Youth's concerns**  
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It was fire and brimstone on Wednesday and Thursday at the PAS Youth assembly where one angry delegate after another lashed out at party leaders, Pakatan Rakyat and Anwar Ibrahim. MCPX

The press, particularly the Chinese-dailies, had a field day documenting the assembly's lively and emotional proceedings which saw delegates raising a host of issues, such as the restriction of alcohol sale and gambling in Pakatan-held states.

But it was the delegate's harsh criticism of certain party leaders for holding clandestine talks with Umno counterparts and claims of neglect by certain Pakatan-held state governments which held centre stage so far.

pas muktamar 54th ipoh stadium opening day 150808 08By Friday, all eyes were on PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's policy speech and specific reference to these two contentious issues.

Unlike the Youth' debates Abdul Hadi was a picture of calm and composure and delivered his 75-minute speech, laden with indirect references, with precision and eloquence.

He said that the party was open to thalamus siyasi (dialogues) with all groups but would not cooperate with a "diseased" political parties or governments on the verge of collapse.

He did not name the "diseased" parties but judging from the loud chants of Allahu Akhbar from the floor, Abdul Hadi had struck a chord with the grassroots.

"One thing clearly stated by the president is that PAS has ruled out any political cooperation with Umno," PAS treasurer Dr Hatta Ramli told Malaysiakini.

Right after the March 8 general election, several top ranking PAS leaders held discussions with the party's arch nemesis Umno, purportedly on issues pertaining to Islam and Malays.

The meetings however were panned by grassroots who saw the move as a form of betrayal.

Kota Raja delegate Mohd Termizi Ismail concurred with Abdul Hadi, adding that channels of communication must be open to groups who want to hold sincere discussions.

"But with Umno, they just want to take advantage of the situation and twist the facts," said 47-year-old party faithful.

### **Relationship within Pakatan**

Abdul Hadi also spoke at length on the need to strengthen the alliance between PAS, DAP and PKR - dubbed Pakatan Rakyat - in order to fulfil the mandate provided by voters on March 8 in the states they now control.

pas muktamar 54th ipoh stadium opening day 150808 16He even said PAS would spearhead

the formation of a council for the five menteri besar in the Pakatan-held states to better coordinate cooperation and sharing of resources.

However it was Abdul Hadi's fleeting mention that PAS should not be sidelined and that the party was the "king maker" in the political arena which raised most eyebrows.

The PAS Youth assembly was filled with condemnation of alleged marginalization by Pakatan partners in Selangor and Penang.

Following this, PAS vice-president Nasharuddin Mat Isa acknowledged to reporters that there were disenchantment amongst grassroots who believe the party was being sidelined.

Abdul Hadi himself did not elaborate on the "sidelined" remark but his Youth chief Salahuddin Ayub believed that PAS had not been "sidelined".

"I don't think we are being sidelined by our allies. Generally, the president's message is that in the long run PAS must help strengthen Pakatan," said Salahuddin.

Salahuddin's views are echoed by Hatta and party central committee member Dr Dzulkifli Ahmad when the duo were approached by Malaysiakini.

### **Debates healthy**

Rationalising the Youth wing's position, Hatta said that strong remarks were the result of teething problems in the new state governments resulting in a perception that they had been sidelined.

"It's too early to be angry. They need to give the new state government some time," he said.

pas muktamar 54th ipoh stadium opening day 150808 12Nevertheless, Dzulkifli opined that the Youth wing's performance should not be discouraged as it was a sign that democracy was alive in the party.

"I think it is good because we will have check and balance in the party and this is not the only what we preach to others, this must be practiced by us," he said.

PAS vice-president Husam Musa agrees and said that the Youth wing should be free to voice their opinions freely.

"The Youth wing got a bit excited but they are still growing and maturing in how they present their views," he said.

Observers would be looking to see if the national party delegates would be reacting to the Youth wing's debates and Abdul Hadi's speech.

Abdul Hadi's speech was supposed to be debated on Friday but organisers have postponed debates till today to allow the delegates a chance to reflect on the issues raised overnight.