

Delegates : Woo non-Muslims
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Several delegates at the PAS muktamar have called on the party leadership to reach out to non-Muslims and encourage their participation in the party.
MCPX

The calls come at a time when arch-rival Umno is at its lowest ebb and has yet to show interest in addressing its unpopularity among non-Malay voters.

The delegates are also likely to take advantage of an apparent willingness among non-Muslim to swing votes away from Barisan Nasional towards PAS.

Evidence of this trend was revealed by PAS vice-president Mohamad Sabu at the assembly yesterday when he provided statistics to show how the swing in non-Malay votes had played a significant role in the party's improved standing in Perak and Kedah.

pas muktamar 2008 mohd fahmi abd wahab "We support the party president's policy speech where he called for PAS supporters club members to be given a bigger role," said Penang delegate Mohd Fahmi Abd Wahab today.

The party's constitution stipulates that only Muslims are allowed to be full fledged members but PAS supporters clubs are mushrooming throughout the country over the past few years.

Mohd Fahmi said that non-Muslims must be given platforms to voice their concerns with the party leadership and help chart the party's future.

"They are worried that if we rule (the country), they will end up being marginalised," he said, adding that it was imperative to retain the strong support the party had received from non-Muslims during the March 8 general election.

Forging national unity

PAS Youth wing delegate Namdin Hassan stressed the importance of politik perpaduan (unity politics), more so as this year's muktamar is themed 'PAS for all'.

Echoing Abdul Hadi's policy speech, Namdin suggested that the party engage groups, including non-Muslims, to forge national unity.

"The basis must be justice in order to ensure peace. We should build bridges with all parties," he said.

Johor delegate Mohd Rozali Jamil suggested fielding PAS supporters club members as party candidates in future general elections.

pas muktamar 54th ipoh stadium opening day 150808 13 He said Johor PAS was looking into this as a possible way to draw non-Muslims closer to the party in view of the changing political landscape in the country.

Mohd Rozali also stressed that Johor PAS created history of sorts when it fielded an Indian candidate during the March polls.

"However, we have to ensure that the clubs have guidelines to ensure that no elements within the clubs act to the detriment of the party's struggle," he said.

PAS must thread carefully

Two other delegates, while supporting greater participation of non-Muslims in the party, cautioned the party to thread carefully on the matter.

pas muktamar 54th ipoh stadium opening day 150808 06Kedah delegate Musoddah Ahmad said that Kedah PAS had no qualms if non-Muslims were even made full fledged members of the party to fulfill the 'PAS for all' mantra.

However, he said that if this was the case, a new party with the tagline 'PAS for Muslims' must be established as other faiths in PAS might dilute the party's Islamic leanings.

"There should be a PAS strictly for Muslims to allow the ulamak to continue what they have been doing," he said.

Negeri Sembilan delegate Zakaria Khalid added that should non-Muslims be made full fledged members, PAS would no longer be Islamic-centric.

"We'll end up as a normal party and no longer lean towards Islam," he said.

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