

PAS goes green for its election manifesto

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KOTA BARU: Stung by criticism from Umno over uncontrolled land clearing at Lojing Highlands, PAS has for the first time decided to include environmental issues in its manifesto for the next general election.

Party deputy president Nasaruddin Mat Isa stressed that PAS was equally concerned about deforestation and pollution, adding that the Lojing issue had been overly politicised.

Nasaruddin, who has been appointed to head the party's committee on drafting a manifesto suitable for the current political scene, said contentious environmental issues would also be championed by PAS.

"Among the issues PAS will emphasise on are educational campaigns for the young and cleanliness."

He said research would be conducted to ascertain the effects of logging and siltation on rivers.

"For the record, the three dirtiest rivers in the country are in Penang and not Kelantan. Unobjective media reporting has contributed towards Kelantan having a bad image, where only failures are highlighted and not successes, like the state producing the top SPM student in the country."

Nasaruddin said environmental issues needed to be tackled by every one, and started with a civic-minded public and proper enforcement.

He said that many times allegations about pollution surfaced after the damage was done,

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NASARUDDIN MAT ISA

raising the question of enforcement.

He also said educational programmes must be included in the school curriculum from young, so youths could be inculcated with preservation, conservation and rehabilitation values.

On another matter, Nasaruddin said PAS would ensure a smooth transition when its spiritual leader and Kelantan Mentri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat decides to step down.

"PAS has groomed people but there is only one Nik Abdul Aziz and we cannot expect a clone to take over," he said.

The health of Nik Abdul Aziz, who was hospitalised overnight for checks two weeks ago, has caused intense speculation here over whether he would remain or step down once an election is called.