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PAS divided on Najib's offer for cooperation *The Sun - 15/12/2015*

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KUALA LUMPUR: Factions in PAS are at loggerheads after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak recently offered to cooperate with the party towards better nation building.

Najib said cooperation was now possible after PAS's ouster from Pakatan Rakyat.

One PAS faction wants cooperation with Umno with possible political understanding later while another faction is against any form of cooperation

with its traditional rival for the Malay votes.

PAS deputy president Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man vocally rejected the offer to work with PAS.

"PAS will never collaborate politically with Umno," he said, adding such cooperation was impossible. "Umno had oppressed PAS members, how can they now want cooperation."

His views were echoed by another PAS leader, Pokok Sena MP Mahfuz Omar. "I suspect he is trying to divert attention from his problems," he said.

PAS vice-president Datuk Iskandar Abdul Samad also rejected Najib's offer.

Party president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, however, said cooperation is all right as long as Umno is sincere and returns to the teaching of Islam.

"The powerful ulama faction he heads is willing to go with Umno and see where the cooperation leads to," said Dr Sivamurugan Pandyan, a political scientist at USM.

"It is not that they had not worked together before.

"The floods in Kelantan last

year brought them together," he said.

While the factions fight, the two leaders - Najib and Hadi - are slated to meet this week at a function organised by the Al-Azhar Alumni.

Umno supreme council member Datuk Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi told BernamaTV last week that Najib would launch the function while Hadi would close it.

"What is important is for us to see how both parties can cooperate on issues relating to religious propagation, deviant teachings, liberalism, and so on," he had said.