

Aziz Bari offers himself as Pakatan candidate for polls
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 30 — Controversial constitutional law expert Prof Dr Abdul Aziz Bari has offered himself as a potential election candidate for Pakatan Rakyat, saying that he wanted to take part in the country's political process by serving as a lawmaker.

The outspoken academic said that while he was "not particularly passionate" about being a party member, he felt that a good and effective two-party system was pivotal to allow proper reforms and good governance.

"I mean I wouldn't for example take part in party elections, I just want to be a lawmaker if they (PR) think I am good enough to be their candidate," Abdul Aziz (picture) told The Malaysian Insider in an email interview.

He confirmed that he had received "unofficial" offers from all three opposition parties — PAS, PKR and the DAP — but said that "it was too early to tell" which party he would contest under.

Abdul Aziz said he had no reservations about contesting under any PR party as "all of them are committed to common policies which in turn uphold the constitution and this is crucial for the emergence of a two-party system."

But the former International Islamic University (UIA) lecturer stated his reservations about getting involved in party politics, and said he was only interested in standing for elections and not as a party man, something he said he does not have the "stamina" for.

"This is the point which those opposed to the idea to bear in mind. Joining politics does not necessarily mean getting involved in party politics.

"In any case politics, like (a) career in academia or (an) NGO, is just a platform for change. Whatever it is I am too old to make politics a career. If I am still in my 40s it is different but I am going to be 53, that is why it is a just a one-off, given the circumstances," he added.

Abdul Aziz was earlier suspended with pay from UIA for criticising the Selangor Sultan's intervention in the state's Islamic Religious Department (Jais) raid on the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) as "uncommon and inconsistent".

He is reportedly eyeing the Sabak Bernam parliamentary seat currently held by Umno's Abdul Rahman Bakri, who is due to enter his defence in June on nine counts of making false claims.

The controversial lecturer is currently the subject of an ongoing internal probe by UIA over his remarks on the Selangor Sultan.

He is also being investigated by the police and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC).

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