

**For Umno, Islam in danger under Pakatan rule**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 3 — Despite being religion of the federation, there is a prevalent fear within Umno delegates that Islam's position still lies on shaky grounds.

The Malay nationalist party believes that only a federal government under Barisan Nasional (BN) will ensure that Islam—deeply embedded within the country's Malay majority populace remains an important aspect within the government administration.

Party delegates wasted little time this morning in launching salvos and sounding alarm bells as to what would happen if Pakatan Rakyat were to take over federal power.

They claim that if this scenario were to take place, the importance of the religion and the practice of the faith among Malays would be in jeopardy.

Delegates have insisted that this was "not impossible", and that events which have unfolded since Election 2008 have proven just that.

"The opposition, what they excel in is bringing up sensitive matters. Take a look with what issues they have championed...pluralism, Seksualiti Merdeka, Kalimah Allah. They will do anything to win votes," Umno's Rizalman Mokhtar told delegates here today.

The Wilayah Persekutuan delegate charged that PR supported causes and issues which were unIslamic and went against religious norms.

Seksualiti Merdeka, a movement championing the freedom of sexual orientation and gender identity, has been holding its festival annually since 2008 but sparked heated debate after the authorities banned this year's celebration.

The issue of the usage of "Allah" among non-Muslims sparked heated debates and controversy last year, resulting in attacks against churches and mosques.

Rizalman said that although Islamist party PAS is part of PR, it was unable to do anything or voice out its concerns.

"DAP has replaced PAS in determining the formation of an Islamic state. Where is it now, what PAS wants?" said the Umno leader sarcastically.

PAS has previously pushed for the concept of an Islamic state, armed with hudud Islamic laws which was consistently opposed by DAP.

The PR leadership has since then clarified that an Islamic state was not within the opposition joint framework, leading the Islamist party to introduce a new concept known as a "negara berkeadilan" (benevolent state).

"Who was the one who said 'over my dead body' before hudud law? Who is against Islam

now? PAS is inconsistent.

"Islam will always resonate within Umno," said Penang Umno delegate Haji Shabudin Yahya.

Umno delegates also spent a good portion of the morning debate session to highlight BN's contributions in upholding Islam through policies as well as the formation of various agencies.

"Under Umno, various Islamic departments have been formed like Jakim, Jawi. We formed the first 'dakwah' Islamic station, Al-Hijrah as well as Yayasan Dakwah Islamiyah Malaysia.

"Umno has produced an effective Islamic administrative. Can the same be said for those on the other side?" said Shabudin.

He said that proof of PAS' straying away from the proper Islamic path was its recently-concluded party elections, where its Ulama faction had been ousted to make way for Mohamad Sabu.

Mohamad emerged the winner of the party's deputy presidency, defeating prominent ulamas Nasharuddin Mat Isa and Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man.

"If Mat Sabu (Mohamad) eventually becomes president, what kind of struggle will he bring?" asked Shabudin, the Tasek Gelugor division chief.

Umno goes into what is likely to be its last general assembly before a general election expected early next year.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is said to need a marked improvement from the last polls to retain his position and only a return of Barisan Nasional's customary two-thirds majority of Parliament can guarantee he remains in office.

BN ceded 82 federal seats and five state governments to the opposition in the landmark March 2008 election.

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