

Mat Sabu warns defence forces chief not to be partisan
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By Debra Chong

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 20 — PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu today warned General Tan Sri Zulkefli Mohd Zin against being made a political tool, reminding him the defence forces serve under orders from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

He also called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to stop all attempts to drag the military into politics.

Zulkefli, who is Chief of Defence Forces, had broken the military's silence last Thursday to deny the allegations by four former soldiers who said they had been ordered by their commanding officers to mark thousands of ballot papers on behalf of other servicemen.

Bernama Online had Zulkefli saying that voting by soldiers was clean, transparent and done in a professional manner without any interference from higher-ups.

He told a news conference attended by Chief of Air Force General Tan Sri Rodzali Daud, Chief of Army General Datuk Zulkifli Zainal Abidin and Chief of Navy Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Jaafar that the balloting process was monitored by representatives of all the contesting political parties and independent observers.

But Mohamad, popularly called Mat Sabu, said it was not proper for any explanation, if required, to come directly from the generals themselves.

"It should be from the Defence Ministry, it should be the defence minister," the PAS politician told The Malaysian Insider. Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is currently defence minister.

"Or SPR," he added, after a brief pause, referring to the Election Commission by its better-known Malay initials.

"If the armed forces are involved, it could lead to bad things — the armed forces will become partisan," Mohamad said.

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