

**PAS Youth declares support for Himpun before central leadership meet**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
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**By G. Manimaran**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 18 — PAS Youth has gone ahead of its central leadership to declare its support for Himpunan Sejuta Umat (Himpun), a gathering of a million Muslims across the political divide to rally against proselytisation by Christians here.

PAS Youth chief Nasrudin Hassan said his members would offer the same support to Himpun, or the "Gathering of a Million Faithful", as it had for the Bersih 2.0 rally for free and fair elections on July 9.

"PAS Youth takes the same stand as it did when it supported the coalition of over 60 NGOs in Bersih 2.0 that was fighting for a democratic system and a clean election system. PAS Youth had joined that gathering, standing together with the thousands that July 9.

"Inshaallah, my friends in PAS Youth and I will adopt the same attitude to Himpun this October 22," he said in a statement today.

"May the gathering succeed in achieving its goals and objectives, outlined with the blessing and mercy of Allah," he added.

Nasrudin (picture) also thanked all the Muslim NGOs behind the planned gathering and pledged PAS Youth's continued support in their efforts to uphold Islam in the country.

According to Nasrudin, Himpun involves over 1,000 Muslim NGOs and the gathering will be the first of its kind in the country.

The event, he said, could see the coming together of Muslims in Malaysia.

PAS Youth's open support for Himpun comes ahead of the party's central leadership, which, according to Selangor PAS commissioner Dr Abdul Rani Osman, would only meet tonight to decide if it would attend the gathering at the Shah Alam Stadium.

Yesterday, the party's Selangor chapter said it would only support Himpun if its ideals and objectives were clear and sincere and were not aimed at worsening religious tension in the country.

Dr Rani had also said that PAS hoped the gathering would not be turned into a political event meant to attack Pakatan Rakyat (PR).

"Efforts to create animosity between those of different faiths without concrete proof in court should be avoided," he had said in a media report.

The Malaysian Insider reported yesterday a planned gathering of a million Muslims this Saturday to rally against Christians "challenging the sovereignty of Islam", a momentous event that could raise religious tension that has intensified in recent months after alleged proselytising by Christians.

Himpun is being organised by various right-wing groups such as Perkasa with the backing of both Umno and PAS Youth in what appears to be a coming together of conservative Muslims.

About 1,000 Facebook users have confirmed their attendance so far but should Himpun draw much more to the Shah Alam Stadium this weekend, it could push Umno and PAS to seek relevance among more religious Malays.

With ethnic tensions already rising in the years following the 2008 general election, it could raise already simmering fears of Islamisation among non-Muslims and more liberal Malays.

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