

Mahfuz: Hasan Ali insulting PAS president
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7 — PAS vice-president Datuk Mahfuz Omar accused Datuk Hasan Ali today of insulting their party president for discouraging students from joining Monday's rally in support of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang had given his backing to the so-called "901" demonstration organised by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) partner PKR to coincide with the verdict of Opposition Leader Anwar's sodomy trial.

Mahfuz (picture) said the Selangor executive councillor, who recently attacked the party for not being committed to Islam, has damaged the image and dignity of Abdul Hadi with his statement which "went against the flow."

"The president has said he will attend the gathering but Hasan then said the move will be in vain.

"This is an insult to the president and it is grievous when a president is insulted by one of his leaders who apparently lauds religious scholars but now dishonours his own president," the Pokok Sena MP told The Malaysian Insider.

Hasan had advised university students on Thursday to stay away from the planned mammoth rally to support PKR de facto leader Anwar.

The Gombak Setia assemblyman further warned that the country risked descending into anarchy if Malaysians persisted in resorting to protests to air their grievances.

"In the end, it will be lawless. Can you imagine a country without laws, without rules and regulations," Hasan said.

PKR has called on its members and all PR supporters to turn up in large numbers at the Jalan Duta court complex in Kuala Lumpur to show support for Anwar and to protest against the state's alleged political machinations.

PKR deputy president Azmin Ali, who will lead the 901 march, also called on PAS yesterday to take action against Hasan for "running his mouth."

Mahfuz said the party will demand an explanation from Hasan according to the party constitution.

"What has happened is very disheartening. Members are disappointed with Hasan's actions which have damaged morale in the party," he said.

Anwar was charged with sodomising a former male aide, Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan, in 2008, an allegation he has vehemently denied, claiming it is a ploy to end his political career.

The 64-year-old grandfather faces up to 20 years in jail if found guilty, which will effectively end his chances of becoming prime minister.

Last month, Hasan had stoked the ire of his colleagues in PAS when he criticised the party in Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian and TV3 for purportedly abandoning its Islamist credentials for the sake of political gain.

Hasan had accused PAS, which removed him as Selangor chief after its general assembly in June 2010, of straying from its original struggle for an Islamic state by pushing for a welfare state.

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