

PAS ulama chief tells PKR, DAP to respect Azizan's views
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 29 — Datuk Haron Taib has defended Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak's move to stand by the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA), saying such a decision was the prerogative of the Kedah menteri besar.

The PAS ulama chief was quoted by the News Straits Times as saying that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) partners DAP and PKR should respect Azizan's views on the issue.

"Azizan is the menteri besar and has the right to make any decision, regardless of whether others are happy with it.

"It is easy for PKR to criticise us as they are not in Azizan's position," Haron was quoted as saying.

Haron said that PAS should have the freedom to act on its own, and that it did not need to agree with everything that its other PR partners had said.

"Although we are in a pact, that does not mean we have to agree with everything that the other party says, we must have the freedom to act on our own," he said.

Azizan (picture) had previously been criticised by constitutional expert Prof Abdul Aziz Bari for defending Kolej Universiti Insaniah (Kuin)'s suspension of five students under the UUCA in May last year, something which Azizan has said he is willing to be sacked for.

The five Kuin students were hauled up before a disciplinary committee on May 25, 2011 for breaching the UUCA by participating in a demonstration, making speeches with loudspeakers and holding a press conference to protest the use of a religious teaching block to house a smart school.

Mohd Faiz Mohd Arshad was suspended for two semesters while the rest were barred for one semester and given warning letters.

Although the suspension was meted out nearly eight months ago with four of the five having already served their one-semester bans, the activists have continued to pursue the matter in court.

However, the Kuala Lumpur High Court postponed the January 18, 2011 hearing on the suit to challenge the suspension without giving a new date.

PAS has demanded Azizan explain the suspension of the five students during its central leadership meeting this coming February 12.

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