

PAS embraces pluralism, says Hadi
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

KUALA LUMPUR, March 8 — PAS is a party which upholds and defends the rights of all Malaysians regardless of their faith and not just Malays, Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said today.

The PAS president said that there was a misconception that the Islamist party had “abandoned” its Islamic principles by associating itself with PKR and Chinese-majority DAP, and accused PAS’ detractors of not fully understanding Islam itself.

He acknowledged the fact that many of PAS’ critics have questioned why the party have not pursued unity talks with Umno, but pointed out that the ideals and goals of both parties were vastly different.

“There are still many who are caught in not understanding Islamic principles, when they find it strange to see PAS working together with non-Muslim parties like DAP, who have been accused of being chauvinist.

“These same people conclude that PAS has sacrificed its principles by working with its partners in Pakatan Rakyat,” he said in a blog posting today.

Abdul Hadi (picture) stressed that Islam in itself was not a religion which was tied to any race or national identity, and that its basic tenets pushed for fairness for a “plural society” with people from different religions.

PAS he said embraced the idea of pluralism in a society and the need to care for all races using the principles of Islam as the main guideline.

“PAS’ approach based on Islam, with respect to its relationship with non-Muslims differs greatly from Umno whose secular nationalism supercedes Islam. Under Barisan Nasional, Islam is not at the forefront of the administration but below,” said the Marang MP.

“PAS upholds justice for all without forcing (our) beliefs, and ensuring all races are treated fairly and given the opportunity to build the nation.

“Malays have special qualities, so do the Chinese, Indians and others. If there is fairness for all races we can build a better country,” he added.

PAS unity bureau chief Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa told The Malaysian Insider the concept of “plurality” was deeply rooted within the party, and pointed out to the party’s formation and support for its non-Muslim wing.

“For PAS, plurality is necessary to be in a harmonious society,” said the Parit Buntar MP.

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