

DPM: Retirees bound by oath
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KUALA LUMPUR: Civil servants are bound by their oath against divulging sensitive government information even after they have retired from service.

In issuing the reminder, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said former civil servants could not release information detrimental to national security and interest or those that came under the purview of the Official Secrets Act (OSA).

He said the oath that each of them took when joining the service remained in force even after they retire.

He said that while it was the right of every retired civil servant to join the political party of his choice, he, however, could not divulge government information or secrets to gain political mileage.

"They may have left the service but they are still subjected to the oath not to divulge government information," he said after launching the Federal Territory Barisan Nasional election machinery yesterday.

He was responding to reports that two former senior government officials had recently joined PAS.

Former Land and Cooperatives Development Ministry secretary-general Datuk Dr Nik Zain Nik Yusof handed over his membership at the party's recent mass gathering in Kedah while former federal CID chief Datuk Fauzi Shaari joined PAS last month.

A civil servant is required to sign a declaration before his department head or state secretary not to divulge, use or hold without authority information that can endanger security of the country, or which is in breach of the OSA.

On Dr Nik Zain and Fauzi joining PAS, Muhyiddin said: "It's their choice. If they want to join the party, we can't stop them".

He also noted that the recent PAS gathering in Kedah was merely the party's way of trying to shore up dwindling support in the northern state.

On another matter, Muhyiddin said Barisan was prepared to face the possibility of the Opposition denouncing the results of the general election if they lost.

"They may proclaim the polls results as unjust, unfair or not clean to create a negative perception," he said.

He said such a scenario was possible following the growing support for Barisan since the last general election in 2008.

He said the possible scenario was part of a "grand design" to wage a "psychological warfare" aimed at conditioning the rakyat for street demonstrations akin to the Arab Spring if the Opposition lost.

"The psychological warfare is being perpetrated so that if Barisan Nasional wins in the election, the rakyat would be conditioned for an uprising to topple the democratically-elected government," he added.

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