

PAS Caught Between Grassroots Demand And Opposition Partners
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 4 (Bernama) -- Several fiery issues have been clouding PAS recently, including hudud laws, the post of prime minister, and the latest on the usage of the word 'Allah' by non-Muslims, sandwiching the party leadership between the demand of grassroots members and the desire of its opposition partners.

To what extent are the PAS leaders able to sail in the same direction with PKR and DAP when more party members are calling for the party to return to its original route, and if need be, to go alone without the burden of its coalition partners?

Among them was Nasharuddin Mat Isa who had made it clear that PAS should return to its original struggle to uphold Islam and protect the interest of the Malays, without the cooperation of PKR and DAP which have conflicting interests.

The former PAS deputy president said the clash of interests with PKR and DAP had weakened the original struggle of PAS, adding that the party was sufficiently strong to grow as a major party in the country, without PKR and DAP.

"Lately, the PAS leadership has been caught in a chess game to prioritise political benefits away from the party's struggle to uphold Islam which was clamoured for, by its grassroots members.

"Among the issues is the word, 'Allah', which cannot be casually used by non-Muslims for their own purpose," said the Bachok member of parliament.

The Allah issue was raised by DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng who called on the government to allow the word to be used in the Bahasa Melayu version of the Bible, and the opposition coalition, including the PAS leadership, also agreed with the suggestion.

However, the PAS Syura council issued a resolution against the stand of the opposition coalition.

According to Nasharuddin, the PAS leadership, in agreeing with the usage of Allah by non-Muslims, had caused great disappointment among grassroots members.

"PAS should now place the struggle for Islam in its forefront as desired by grassroots members, and not prioritise its cooperation with its opposition allies to capture Putrajaya," he said.

The party was also disappointed when its annual general conference decision to nominate PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang as prime minister was snubbed by its opposition partners as they clearly preferred Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for the post.

Nasharuddin said that in as far as he was concerned, Abdul Hadi was the most qualified for the post of prime minister.

Among the moves called for, by the grassroots to prevent PAS from straying from its original struggle was to withdraw from cooperating with PKR and DAP.

For Nasharuddin, it would not be a difficult decision and the move could in fact, strengthen PAS.

"There have been far too many contradictions to PAS' original struggle in its liaison with the opposition coalition, and it's time to heed the grassroots call to move away from the pact," he reasoned.

He was disappointed over his sacking from the Syura Council for being too vocal against the party leadership's decision.

He noted that former Selangor PAS commissioner Datuk Dr Hasan Mohamed Ali also met with a similar fate when he was sacked from the party for voicing his concern on PAS' cooperation in the opposition front, and also the credibility of Anwar as the future prime minister of the opposition government.

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