

Nik Aziz: No PAS-Umno unity government as long as I'm alive
Malaysian Insider
May 29, 2013

KUALA LUMPUR, May 29 — PAS spiritual adviser Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat has vowed never to permit his party to form a unity government with Umno while he drew breath, saying he found no reason for such a co-operation.

In an interview with PAS organ Harakah published today, the former Kelantan menteri besar also issued a stern reminder to party members to never pursue the effort.

He said apart from a clash in party ideologies, there were many other issues that would render it impossible for PAS to join hands with Umno.

"No one can organise efforts for cooperation between PAS and Umno, much less do it quietly... this party is open to everyone and belongs to its members.

"I would not allow it, for as long as I am still alive, I would not permit any effort for cooperation between PAS and Umno," he was quoted as saying.

In the years after the 2008 general election, cracks appeared in the PAS leadership following talk that several leaders in the Islamist party had either been approached by Umno or were mulling the possibility of merging with the ruling party to form a unity government.

The move was purportedly made in the name of Muslim unity but PAS loyalists held strong to the belief that their party should remain in cohorts with Pakatan Rakyat (PR), the loose pact that was formed after the 2008 polls.

The question of political co-operation with Umno also became a major campaign issue in the 2009 PAS election after it was revealed that its leaders, including PAS deputy president Nasharudin Mat Isa and then Selangor chief Datuk Hasan Ali, met former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and former Selangor menteri besar Dr Mohd Khir Toyo after the polls to explore the possibility of forming a unity government.

Leaders aligned to Nik Aziz then accused Nasharudin of conspiring to take PAS out of PR, but the deputy president successfully defended his post in a three-cornered fight with Mohamad Sabu and Kelantan executive councillor Datuk Husam Musa.

After Election 2013, Nasharudin emerged yet again to revive talk of forging cooperation with Umno, claiming this time that this was in the spirit of "national reconciliation".

The PAS conservative, who was edged out by the party's progressives during their 2011 internal polls, insisted that negotiation to unite both warring Malay-centric parties must be continued for the sake of strengthening Islam and the position of the Malay race in the country.

"To me, the unity of PAS and Umno must be a continuing agenda. I only cannot accept it when what is being pursued in the unity between PAS and Umno, there are those who say their face should be spat on.... what religious teaching is this?" he was quoted saying by state news agency Bernama a week after the May 5 election.

Nasharudin, who was left out of the recent polls race, added that from his experience, "not all in Umno are demons, and not all in PAS are angels."

The former Bachok MP was just earlier this year sacked from the PAS Syura Council, the party's highest decision-making wing, following his numerous open spats with fellow Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders, particularly, the DAP's chairman Karpal Singh, on his party's endorsement of the hudud law.

When confirming the expulsion late January this year, Syura Council secretary Datuk Nik Zawawi Nik Salleh had said Nasharudin was found to have broken several of the body's regulations including non-attendance of council meetings.

Nasharudin had also previously asked the party to review its co-operation with other PR parties if coalition partner DAP continued to oppose the implementation of hudud laws, the Islamic penal code.

His actions have drawn the criticism of other PAS members and during the party's 2011 polls, he lost his bid to defend his post as PAS deputy president and was replaced by Mohamad Sabu, seen as a leader in the party's faction of progressives.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/nik-aziz-no-pas-umno-unity-government-as-long-as-im-alive/>