

Hadi's son-in-law says he is PAS backbone and saviour
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BY HASBULLAH AWANG CHIK

Addressing party critics, the son-in-law of the PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang has described himself as the "backbone" in the fight against those out to undermine the credibility of the party's leadership.

Zaharudin Muhammad said all his actions in the party was aimed at protecting Abdul Hadi, PAS spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, and deputy president Mohamad Sabu from those within the Islamist party who wanted to discredit them.

Zaharudin, or Din Ayam as he is popularly known, said he was forced to become Abdul Hadi's "supporting entity" in the party during the last general election as there was a group within that wanted to see the party do badly.

He said this in a statement posted on his Facebook page following a report in The Malaysian Insider that highlighted his growing influence in the Islamist party through Abdul Hadi, which has had tongues wagging.

Zaharudin criticised The Malaysian Insider for equating his relationship with Abdul Hadi as being on the same footing as former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin, the Youth and Sports Minister.

"I am amused by this comparison with the Umno experience. If this is the case, who in PAS is the equivalent of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Najib?" he asked in a statement posted in his Facebook page yesterday.

"Is this an attempt to topple Abdul Hadi by the 'Mahathir PAS' the way Mahathir toppled Pak Lah? Who is the Najib PAS who will replace Abdul Hadi?" he said referring to the country's longest serving prime minister and Abdullah.

Zaharudin said he would provide witnesses to his claim that he was not the source of the problems in the party but, rather, it was those out to topple the president.

The influential Syura Council member also denied that he was the cause for the Pakatan Rakyat's defeat in the Kota Damansara seat in the May 5 polls.

"Who is to be blamed then for PR defeats in Sungai Acheh, Labuan, Bukit Besi and other state and parliamentary seats where PAS and PKR had overlapping claims for the same seats?"

He said the claim that the Parti Sosialist Malaysia (PSM) candidate Dr Nasir Hashim would have won if PAS had not fielded a candidate is flawed.

Zaharudin said his critics' assumption that the 7,312 votes received by the PAS candidate would have gone to Dr Nasir is wrong.

"Why did these voters vote for PAS when we had removed our billboards and notified voters that our candidate was no longer in the race?" he asked.

Zaharudin said he had data which showed that the 7,312 people who voted for PAS would not have necessarily supported PSM if the party had not fielded a candidate.

"Kota Damansara voters are well educated and informed and are better positioned to evaluate PAS or Umno candidates," he said.

He had also blamed Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad for the Kota Damansara seat loss as he had failed to take into account the PAS local chapter's views on the seat.

The Malaysian Insider had in an earlier report showed that Zaharudin would play a key role in the party's ulama faction's effort to topple its liberals, or "Erdogan" as they are called.

However, Zaharudin did not touch on this subject or how he had influenced his father-in-law to get PKR to give up the Temerloh seat for the party's youth chief Nasrudin Hassan - August 1, 2013.

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