

**PAS group campaigns to keep Islamist party in Pakatan  
Malaysian Insider  
Sept 3, 2014  
BY THE MALAYSIAN INSIDER**

Some PAS members have started a campaign to ensure the Islamist party stays in Pakatan Rakyat (PR), in what could be a challenge to Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang's conservative leadership in the party.

The Persatuan Ummah Sejahtera Malaysia (PasMa) was formed after some 100 PAS members met in Kota Baru on Sunday, say sources, with the aim to counter the rising possibility of PAS leaving the pact in favour of sharing power with Umno.

"During the meeting on Merdeka Day, we gathered more than 100 people from across the country for one purpose: to make sure PAS's battle is on the right track," one of the movement's founders told The Malaysian Insider.

He declined to be identified as the conservative party does not brook any dissent to the leadership.

The movement was initiated after Hadi told a central committee meeting on August 25 that he wished to cooperate with Umno to form the Selangor state government.

It is not yet known how the top PAS leadership is reacting to the new movement.

The Malaysian Insider last week reported on Hadi's proposal that PAS, Umno and Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim work together, with PKR deputy president Mohamed Azmin Ali as the new menteri besar.

Hadi's political secretary, Dr Ahmad Samsuri Mokhtar, has denied the report and insisted that no such talks between Azmin and Hadi had taken place. The Malaysian Insider stands by its original report.

A source told The Malaysian Insider that PasMa will conduct briefings across the country to explain why PAS must remain with PR and reject Umno.

The first briefing will be held at a hotel in Shah Alam on September 8, and will be conducted by three panellists: PAS vice-president Datuk Husam Musa, central committee member Datuk Mujahid Yusof Rawa and former Shura council member Ahmad Awang.

"We will involve all quarters in this event, especially the professionals and the ulama," said the source.

Ties between the three parties in PR have been strained of late, following the Kajang Move that PKR engineered to remove Khalid as Selangor menteri besar.

The PAS president, spiritual adviser and the Shura council initially opposed the move and threw their support behind Khalid.

But after PKR sacked Khalid from the party, PAS accepted its ally's decision that he step down from the top post.

However, the Islamist party was uneasy with PKR's proposal to replace Khalid with Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, despite its own central committee's decision on August 17 to nominate both her and Azmin for the position.

In a bid to ensure Dr Wan Azizah becomes MB, PKR secured the support of two PAS assemblymen to obtain the majority support of the state legislative assembly.

Several quarters within PAS were unhappy over this, and attempted to persuade Azmin to join them in an alliance comprising 13 PAS and 12 Umno assemblymen, Azmin and several PKR state representatives.

Rumours surfaced recently of an alleged meeting between a senior PAS leader, three PKR Selangor assemblymen and Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

The meeting was allegedly held to pave the way for a collaboration between the three PKR representatives, PAS and Umno to form a new government in Selangor.

Husam said yesterday that Umno wants to work with Selangor PAS with the hope that the Islamist party will help it secure the two-thirds majority needed in the upcoming redelineation of parliamentary constituencies.

"Selangor is their nearest bait," Husam had written in an article in PAS's publication, Harakah, adding that he was confident that Umno's efforts will meet a dead end. – September 3, 2014.

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