

PAS says 'no' to political cooperation with PPBM

Free Malaysia Today

April 29, 2017

By Robin Augustin

PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang claims PPBM is a party without direction and unclear in terms of who its leader is.

ALOR SETAR: PAS will not form an electoral pact with Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) as it cannot "entertain" a party which isn't the "same" as the Islamist party, says PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang.

At a press conference on the sidelines of the PAS Muktamar here today, Hadi also criticised PPBM – a party led by former Umno leaders – as being without direction.

"We have done an evaluation and found that PPBM is a party without direction. There's no direction and it's not even clear who their leader is."

He said this was why PAS made the decision against working with the Malay-based PPBM.

In recent times, Pakatan Harapan leaders, specifically those from PPBM and PKR, have urged PAS to state whether they would be joining the opposition bloc to take on the Barisan Nasional.

Last year, PPBM president Muhyiddin Yassin voiced confidence that PPBM could be the "glue" between PAS and Pakatan Harapan.

PAS has refused to work with Pakatan Harapan, especially DAP and Amanah which are part of the pact alongside PKR and PPBM.

However, lately, even ties between PAS and PKR have been strained and this was evident at the muktamar with PAS' Dewan Ulama and youth wing passing resolutions to cut ties with PKR.

Earlier, PAS and PPBM were in talks on possible political cooperation for the next general election (GE14) and even formed a joint-technical committee on the matter.

PPBM chairman and former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamd gave a deadline, demanding PAS state if they would cooperate with PPBM. Subsequently, Hadi said there was no need for PPBM to wait for PAS, as the party wouldn't cooperate with any party who had ties to DAP and Amanah.

In March, Muhyiddin said that ties between PAS and PPBM were getting “warmer” citing PAS’ supposed invitation to them to discuss seat allocations. But PAS deputy president Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man promptly denied such talks would be carried out, as it was still too early to discuss such matters.

Earlier today, Hadi in his opening address at the muktamar said “no one” could force or threaten PAS into stating their political stand, more so when it was part of their political strategy to keep such information close to their chest.

On another issue, Hadi said that the party’s plan to stand in 80 parliamentary constituencies in GE14 wasn’t extreme.

“We have branches in 165 of the 222 parliamentary constituencies in the country.

“We feel it is moderate (to contest 80 seats) compared with contesting in 165 seats. Other parties don’t have divisions or branches in some constituencies and in the past relied on PAS’ election machinery in such areas,” he said, without naming any specific party.

In the 2013 general election, PAS contested in 73 parliamentary seats, winning 21 of those seats.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/04/29/pas-says-no-to-political-cooperation-with-ppbm/>