

Mat Sabu: Amanah, unlike Semangat 46, will survive

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Admitting, however, that some Amanah members still retain the feudalistic ways of PAS, Mat Sabu says the party has intelligent, quality members.

PETALING JAYA: Amanah will survive and thrive, says its president Mohamad Sabu.

Even though his party's progress, he admitted, was comparatively slower than that of its newest ally, Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, despite having a one year head start, he was confident Amanah would do well.

As Amanah has its own ideology and quality members comprising of intellectuals, the party's long-term survival is something he is sure of.

"More and more intellectuals are joining Amanah, because they are confident about the party's future," said Mohamad, who is better known as Mat Sabu, in an interview with FMT yesterday.

Amanah will not be like the short-lived Semangat 46.

"It (Semangat 46) was only based on the needs of the time. Although Semangat 46 featured so many ministers and political personalities such as Ku Li (Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah) and Rais Yatim, it didn't last long after losing at the polls."

Semangat 46 was formed in 1988 by Umno's "Team B", led by Tengku Razaleigh. The party failed to defeat the Barisan Nasional in the 1990 general election, and its performance worsened in the 1995 polls when many of its leaders lost their seats.

It was disbanded in 1996, after Tengku Razaleigh and others rejoined Umno.

Mat Sabu, who was in PAS for over three decades, expressed confidence in Amanah's relevance and said the party aimed to champion Islam in line with the changing times.

While the party looked up to the administration of PAS' former spiritual adviser, the late Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, it aimed to go further by filling in the gaps left by other Islamic parties, he added.

"Most Islamic parties and movements prioritise the laws and rules of Islam, but fail to champion Islamic values such as the principles of justice and the rejection of corrupt practices.

“Why do we want to leave this battle solely in the hands of those labelled as leftists and liberals?”

He, however, admitted that there were still party members who carried on their old ways as in PAS, as most Amanah leaders and members were once part of the Islamist party.

The old ways, Mat Sabu explained, included the feudalistic mindset that placed importance on Muslims’ interests, at the expense of the rights of people of other religions.

“Amanah can’t be a static party. It needs to grow and expand according to the present developments. We can’t repeat the mistakes of our former friends.”

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