

PAS 64th Muktamar to be a deciding event in PAS-UMNO cooperation

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KOTA BHARU, Sept 12 (Bernama) -- The 64th PAS Muktamar (General Assembly) this weekend has been seen as the event that will determine the direction to be taken by the Islamic-based party in forging a possible cooperation with opposition parties, including its long-term nemesis, UMNO.

Political analyst Dr Kamarul Zaman Yusoff said that in view of the possible cooperation, the policy speech of PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang at the opening of the Muktamar this Saturday (Sept 15) would definitely be the focus of attention.

UMNO president Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is among the opposition leaders who has conformed his attendance at the PAS Muktamar and to listen to Abdul Hadi's speech in person.

"The PAS president's speech will definitely touch the issue of cooperation between PAS and the parties from the opposition bloc and it will surely be good to hear if he wants to further strengthen any existing cooperation," Kamarul Zaman, who is a lecturer at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UTM) College of Law, Government and International Studies (COLGIS) told Bernama?.

The Muktamar, scheduled to be held in Terengganu on Sept 15 and 16 would see the gathering of over 1,200 PAS delegates from all over the country.

Prior to the general assembly, the party will also hold the Muktamar of its Dewan Ulama on Sept 13, and the Muktamar of Dewan Pemuda, Dewan Muslimat, as well as the Convention of Dewan Himpunan Penyokong PAS on Sept 14.

Meanwhile, Kamarul Zaman said there was a possibility that the general assembly would see a heated debate, especially among the delegates who might disagree with the possible cooperation between PAS and UMNO and would insist that PAS continue to uphold its original principles.

He also believed that there would be a motion tabled by certain delegates who wanted a clearer form of cooperation between PAS and UMNO in the future, especially in facing the 15th General Election (GE15).

Meanwhile, PAS Dewan Ulama Information chief Mohd Asri Mat Daud said apart from the cooperation issue, the party's first Muktamar after the GE14 would also underline several important matters that would become the key performance indicators (KPI) for PAS leaders to face the GE15.

"PAS must lead the Islamic economy and how the Islamic economy should be developed, how to build a prosperous country and how to tackle social issues," he said, while expressing hope that the delegation would find the best resolutions in those matters for the people's wellbeing.

He said the Muktamar of Dewan Ulama would also discuss Muslim-related issues, including the possibility to standardise the implementation of syariah law in Kelantan and Terengganu, which are currently under PAS administration.

Yesterday, PAS secretary-general Datuk Takiyuddin Hassan was reported as saying that the issue of a merger between PAS and UMNO did not arise just because PAS had invited UMNO to send representatives to the Muktamar.

He said the party had also invited MCA and MIC (Barisan Nasional component parties) but only UMNO had responded saying its president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and 10 political bureau leaders would be attending.

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