

Nurul Izzah: Pakatan is coalition of equals

PKR VP says a party that holds dominant views over others is no longer tenable

by SATHISH GOVIND

THE fundamental differences between PAS and DAP suggests that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) is a coalition of equals which allow differing views that will be resolved pragmatically.

At least, that's what PKR VP Nurul Izzah Anwar said.

"PAS and DAP must be allowed to represent their followers confidently and espouse their ideologies but in the end, we are all governed by the federal constitution and pragmatism among the coalition partners will prevail," she told The Malaysian Reserve in an exclusive interview.

She said this was evidenced by the PR-held states such as Selangor, Kedah and Penang, where the different political parties have coalesced to govern effectively despite the ideological differences.

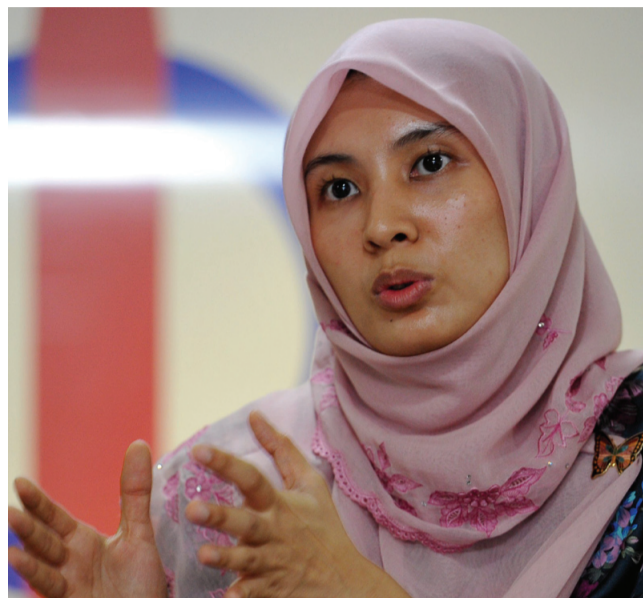
She said the traditional formula where Umno, in the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, holds dominant views was no longer tenable as the political landscape in the country has changed.

"A PR government that is pledging greater political reforms, such as the freedom of the media and allowing for the articulation of views, cannot trample on the rights of the political party within PR from expressing its own ideas."

Nurul Izzah may well be responding to reports that PAS is adamant on implementing hudud if it gains federal power with DAP.

PAS deputy spiritual leader Datuk Dr Haron Din said the party does not foresee DAP strongly opposing hudud, considering the party had agreed to use the PAS logo.

However, DAP chairman, Karpal Singh has asked PAS leaders to stop bringing up the hudud issue as it was not in the manifesto while asking Opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to make a stand on the issue. Karpal said that DAP's stand on hudud is clear and that it should not be brought into the country.



Pic by Ismail Che Rus

Nurul Izzah says the momentum of support for PR has surpassed expectations

Asked on what PR would do immediately if it does come into power, Nurul Izzah said that PR is committed towards implementing structural reforms, "polishing monopolies" and creating conducive business environment through competition.

She said that PR has put in place a policy framework that had been meticulously crafted and has its own plans on what it would do for the first 24 hours or the first 100 days.

"We are mindful that this would be a major political transition and we would have to give assurances to the civil servants and even Umno members. I believe that the first thing would be reconciliation," she said.

However, Nurul Izzah said that PR would continue to be committed to all that was outlined in the manifestos such as bringing down petrol prices.

On PR's chances in the general election to form the government, she said the momentum of support has surpassed expectations, suggesting that people want change.

A case in point, she said, was the voter discrepancies in her Lembah Pantai constituency where there were voters with incomplete addresses, transferred voters and thus voters

remain sceptical about the electoral process.

On her chances to retain the Lembah Pantai seat, she said although turnouts were encouraging, she is up against a formidable opponent in Datuk Raja Nong Chik Raja Zainal Abidin, who holds the coveted position of the Minister of Federal Territory and Urban Wellbeing.

"He being the minister has the entire DBKL (Kuala Lumpur City Hall) and the

government machinery behind him. However, the increasing show of support for PR in the Federal Territory is largely due to the fact that it was PR that had forced the BN to be more responsive because we had won 10 out of 11 seats. They can no longer say that when you vote for the Opposition, you cannot get development," she said.

However, Nurul Izzah said she is still weak in the Malay areas because of the political patronage that was so entrenched.

"There are more than 20,000 BRIM recipients in the constituency and it takes strong political persuasion to tell the people that it is your money that is being given back but what is required is good policy," she stressed.

