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MAHATHIR CHALLENGES PAS TO METE OUT +HUDUD+ PUNISHMENT

Mahathir-Law

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JOHOR BA HARU, April 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today challenged the PAS-dominated government in Kelantan to proceed with its proposal to implement Islamic penal law or +hudud+ in the state.

He said: +We will not oppose them carry out the punishment if it is truly the teachings of Islam. If Nik Aziz (Nik Mat, the Menteri Besar) wishes to do it, let it be... if he wants to chop off hands or even heads, we will not prevent it.

+We want to see who is prepared to mete out all these punishments.+

Mahathir was speaking at a meeting with about 200 divisional committee members of Johor UMNO at the Menteri Besar, Tan Sri Haji Muhyiddin Yasin's residence, Saujana, here.

He was accompanied by Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah on a one-day official visit to the state. -- more

▼16/04/19-46MST

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Mahathir said he believed PAS did not really want to implement such punishments as it was talking about to see that it could claim that whatever it wanted to do, purportedly according to Islamic teachings, was opposed by Umno leaders who were +less Islamic+.

He added: +We cannot implement such punishment as there are several factors which do not permit us to do so but this does not mean we are not adhering to Islamic teachings.+

He said such punishment need not be carried out as Islam allowed +concessions+ in many matters.

The Malaysian government was liberal and did not do anything to suppress others, he added.

Non-Malays in the country were not forced to adopt Malay names as was the case in other countries which forced immigrants to change their names to that of the indigenous people. -- more

▼16/04/19-47MST

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Dr. Mahathir said: +For these reasons Malaysia continues to develop and progress because the ruling party receives the support of all races. In fact many countries envy the success attained by Malaysia and want to learn from us.+

He added, however, Malaysia would lose its success and political stability if the people became obsessed with politicking, careless and at odds with one another.

He reminded Johor Umno members to continue efforts to maintain stability and strengthen the party as only then would UMNO remain in power. -- Bernama

▼16/04/19-48MST