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MAHATHIR ADVISES KELANTAN TO BE CAUTIOUS IN IMPLEMENTING HUDUD LAWS  
Mahathir-Hudud

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KOTA KINABALU, May 1 (Bernama) -- The Kelantan government, in particular Menteri Besar Haji Nik Aziz Nik Mat, should exercise caution and study the hudud (Islamic criminal) laws in depth before implementing them, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said he was concerned of the damage it could do to Islam, not only in the country but outside the country as well.

+If Hudud laws are not implemented, it does not necessarily mean that Muslims are no longer Muslims. If this is so, then 90 per cent of Muslims worldwide would no longer be Muslims,+ he said when addressing Muslims after Friday prayers at Masjid Jamek in Papar, about 45km from here.

Dr Mahathir said the Pas government's proposal to implement the hudud laws contained a political motive to challenge Umno for not wanting to implement the laws.

However, he reminded Pas to desist from casting blame on Umno because it was free to implement the laws. -- more

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Mahathir-Hudud 2 Kota Kinabalu

He feared that once the laws were implemented, the Kelantan government would not be able to treat all communities fairly because of the political motive.

If the judges appointed were also influenced by Pas politics, then their decisions would not be just but political in nature, he said.

He added that Islam made exemptions and Pas should not be too obsessed with implementing hudud laws without taking into account the prevailing situation for it could destroy the Muslims and Islam.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with religious leaders at the Tanjung Aru Beach Resort here, he said he stressed the need for religious tolerance and assured them that the government would not force anyone to change his religion. -- more

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Mahathir-Hudud 3 (last) Kota Kinabalu

Asked for his comments on the outbreak of racial riots in Los Angeles, Dr Mahathir said the American society talked so much about equality and yet the blacks continued to be discriminated against, leaving them backward and frustrated.

On the other hand, the Malaysian government realised the imbalances among its people and had worked hard to correct them, he added.

He said the government was monitoring the situation with regard to the safety of Malaysians there.

Dr Mahathir also said Malaysia was studying the situation in Afghanistan where a new government was in power.

It wanted to see stability return to that country and and it would recognise any government elected by the people.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here yesterday for a two-day visit, returned to Kuala Lumpur this evening. -- Bernama

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