

28 JUL 1997

Anwar-edicts

DON'T RUSH TO ENFORCE SYARIA, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 28 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has reminded state authorities to avoid being hasty in enforcing Syariah laws.

Speaking at a meet-the-people-rally in Puchong Jaya near here, he urged the authorities not to enforce Islamic edicts in a manner that could create tension in the community.

Their approach should be moderation with wisdom, he said echoing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent call on a similar issue.

"Use wisdom, adopt a caring approach when dealing with young people. The approach should not be as if all social ills in the country are solely caused by cultural shows and entertainment," he said.

Anwar simultaneously opened Sekolah Kebangsaan Puchong Jaya, the venue of the gathering and launched its "homepage".

Selangor Menteri Besar Selangor Datuk Abu Hassan Omar was present.

Several companies donated altogether RM60,000 towards the purchase of books for the school's resource centre.

Anwar said it was never his or Dr Mahathir's intention to treat Islamic laws lightly.

He said the leaders were more concerned about avoiding confusion among young people which could lead to them discarding morals and religious faith because of the manner Islamic laws were enforced on them.

Anwar said he purposely chose to speak on enforcement of Islamic laws during his working visit to Selangor today knowing that it was a sensitive issue in the state.

This was more so in the light of recent controversies caused by the state's ban on concerts by king of pop Michael Jackson and local rap group, KRU and more recently the prosecution and conviction of three Muslim women for taking part in a beauty contest.

In his speech, Abu Hassan said Selangor fully supported the federal government's efforts to standardise enforcement of Islamic laws nation-wide.

Towards this end, the state government had already set up religious and information centres in all districts to keep the public updated on syariah laws.

Abu Hassan said it had also allocated RM25 million for an integrated programme to fight social ills in Selangor.-- BERNAMA

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