

29 AUG 1997

Mahathir-Mufti

GOVT TO PROPOSE THAT MUFTIS STOP CHAIRING FATWA COMMITTEE

PASIR PUTIH, Aug 29 (Bernama) -- The government will propose to the Rulers Council that muftis stop chairing state fatwa committees to prevent a conflict of interest, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the move is necessary to prevent a mufti from issuing a fatwa and then be involved in approving it when the committee meets to discuss the matter.

"In the Federal Territory for instance, the mufti can issue a fatwa, and the fatwa will be studied by a committee chaired by the mufti, and the mufti can then gazette it," Dr Mahathir said

"If he is the chairman, the discussion surely won't be that thorough," he told reporters after closing the Kelantan Umno/Barisan Nasional Convention in Semerak here.

The Prime Minister said that the mufti could be involved in the committee but not as the chairman.

He said that if a mufti wants to issue a fatwa, he should refer to a fatwa panel comprising many others including experts.

This move is not aimed at changing the mufti system but is needed because some laws and fatwas issued previously were found to have been carried out in a disorderly fashion, he said.

On the proposal for the creation of the post of National Mufti, Dr Mahathir said it will be difficult because muftis, state governments and the rulers felt that matters on Islam were for them to decide.

"But they have agreed to a streamlining, so that decisions on fatwas are made and applied in all states," he said. -- BERNAMA

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