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Anwar-Islam

NATIONAL SECURITY VITAL FACTOR IN ENFORCING ISLAMIC LAW

KUANTAN, July 26 (Bernama) -- Islamic Law will have to be enforced in a wise way taking into account the priority Syariah Law attaches to a country's national security, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

He said national security would have to be given priority at all times so that the implementation of such a law did not give rise to uproar and political tension in the country.

Assured of national security, the government would be in a position to expand the economy and implement various projects such as poverty eradication as well as educational and health facilities, he said.

He was opening the seventh Pahang Umno Convention at the Dewan Convention here. It was attended by 3,000 delegates and observers. Deputy Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail was also present.

Anwar, who is also Umno Deputy President, said the ruling party in Kelantan should not go overboard in making accusations and condemning the country's leaders in their many speeches, as that party too had a responsibility to ensure national security.

"Are we not responsible for our national security...are we not responsible towards our economy, the quality of education and making this country a model nation?"

Anwar also hit out at people who felt that Umno leaders should not talk about Islam as, according to them, they were not well versed in Islam.

"Let me ask, is everybody well versed about the country's security and economy."

Syariah Law should not be enforced hurriedly for if this was done it would jeopardise national security, he said.

Umno had remained strong all these years because it had held to the principle of moderation in various matters and had not used force in discharging its powers or acted in undue haste.

Mutual understanding, cooperation, tolerance and mutual respect among Malaysia's multi-racial and multi-religious population would have to be preserved at all times, Anwar said.

"We are not opposing syariah...we have shown our commitment through the setting up of syariah institutions, departments and so on through means of our political and economic strength."

Anwar said he had discussed the Syariah Law matter with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Prime Minister was worried that people might have become confused over the issue.

Later when asked about the uniform enforcement of Syariah Law among all the states in the Federation, Anwar said this matter would be brought up by the Prime Minister at the next meeting of the Conference of Rulers.

Anwar launched the book "Sejarah 50 Tahun Perjuangan Umno Pahang" (History of Pahang Umno's 50 Year Struggle) and visited a photo exhibition of Umno leaders. -- BERNAMA

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