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Abdul Hamid-PAS

PAS FACES LEGAL ACTION IF PROVEN TO BE ISSUING OWN "FATWA"

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 7 (Bernama) -- PAS faces legal action if investigations show that the opposition party has been issuing rulings or "fatwa" that run contrary to the teachings of Islam, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Paduka Abdul Hamid Othman said.

He said PAS had obviously ignored proper channels in violation of the laws of the country when issuing rulings of public concern since only state fatwa committees can issue fatwa upon royal command from the sultan or ruler concerned.

"For matters affecting the public, the sultan or ruler of a state will direct the state fatwa committee to convene and issue a fatwa.

"When PAS or certain individuals issue a fatwa, for instance guaranteeing a place in heaven for those voting for PAS and hell for those who do not, this affects faith and violates state laws as well as usurp the powers of a sultan and ruler," he said.

Abdul Hamid said this when reporters approached him on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement on Saturday that Umno was gathering proof that PAS had been issuing rulings that contravened Islamic teachings.

Abdul Hamid, who is also a member of the Umno Supreme Council, described the issue as not only a political one but a national issue as it touched on the sovereignty of the Malay rulers relating to the pronouncement of fatwa.

"The proofs are already there and we're still collecting more of them. We shall act according to existing channels," said Abdul Hamid who was at the Tabung Haji complex in Kelana Jaya here to send off the first batch of 337 people leaving for Jeddah to perform the Haj in the current pilgrimage season.

Meanwhile, Kelantan Menteri Besar and head of PAS' council of scholars Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said the party was prepared to face Umno and rebut allegations relating to the unIslamic fatwa that the opposition party had issued.

"The issue is not with Umno but with the state fatwa committee. Umno can bear witness, but for the sake of political discourse we're all for it," Nik Aziz was quoted as saying in a news report today.

-- BERNAMA

NM RYN