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Gerakan-Islam

DISCUSSIONS ON THE ISLAMIC STATE CONCEPT WILL PREVENT DISUNITY

By: Mohd Haikal Mohd Isa

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Discussions in the open on the concept of the Islamic State will help the various communities in Malaysia understand it better and prevent it from becoming the source for disunity, Gerakan President Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today.

He said the Gerakan was thankful to the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, for kicking off the open discussion on the matter yesterday.

"Many people particularly the Chinese and other non-Muslims have misunderstood the concept of an Islamic State to the extent of being fearful."

"It is good now that we throw this (discussion on Islamic state) in the open because we don't want to create any misunderstanding," he told reporters after closing the Gerakan party's 30th Delegates Conference here.

He said it was of the utmost importance to have openness in the discussions on the concept of the Islamic State as PAS had also raised the issue of setting up an Islamic State when it assumed power in Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir when opening the Gerakan delegates conference yesterday took up the challenge thrown at him by PAS President Datuk Fadzil Noor and officially declared Malaysia as an Islamic State.

Dr Lim said the explanation and discussions on the concept of the Islamic State should be widened to include government officers at all levels.

Such briefings and explanations should be given to government officers for there had been instances when Muslim officers did not channel allocations for building temples as they were made to believe that they would not go to heaven if they did so, he said.

He said the officers could most likely have been influenced by certain groups which were intent on setting up an Islamic State in Malaysia which would be more extreme.

He said the present concept of the Islamic State in Malaysia was the best as it was in line with the Federal Constitution where the rights of non-Muslims were guaranteed.

Dr Lim said this differed from the concept championed by PAS where it preferred only Syariah Law in this country and wanted it to be applied also on non-Muslims and where the country's policies would be decided solely by a Council of Ulama.

Meanwhile in his winding up speech, Dr Lim urged PAS to put in writing its concept of an Islamic State which it wanted to set up in Malaysia and stop skirting around the issue.

"PAS tell us, what kind of Islamic state you want. Because the way you are treating the women in Kelantan, it's just like the way the Taliban are treating women in their Islamic state," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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