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Abdullah-Islam

ISLAMIC STATE: NO NEED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, SAYS ABDULLAH

DUNGUN, Oct 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the government does not intend to amend the Federal Constitution with regard to the declaration of Malaysia as an Islamic State.

The Deputy Prime Minister said Umno leaders should regard this country as an Islamic State and hence, there is no need for a discourse or dialogue with PAS leaders over the matter.

"The question of PAS (wanting Prime Minister to declare in Parliament that Malaysia is an Islamic State so that it can be debated), it's up to them, no need for them to dialogue on the matter," he told reporters after chairing the Terengganu Umno Liaison Committee meeting here.

Abdullah, who is also Terengganu Umno chief, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in a meeting with all Umno Religious Bureaus in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, gave a thorough explanation over the declaration of Malaysia as an Islamic State.

"The declaration does not need any amendments to the Constitution about Malaysia being an Islamic State. Everything will go on fine, the non-Muslims will be given the freedom to practise their religion, that is enshrined in the Constitution," he said.

Abdullah said Barisan Nasional (BN) component party leaders had been briefed on Malaysia's status as an Islamic State at the recent BN Supreme Council meeting.

On calls by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that the government should have a strong intelligence team, Abdullah said the intelligence team had existed all this while.

"What needs to be improved is probably its level of professionalism and the equipment to be used. Secondly, maybe in terms of new approaches that need to be thought because situations faced now are different from the past," he said.

He said the police and armed forces constantly shared information with foreign intelligence to bolster their efficiency.

-- BERNAMA

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