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Mustapa-split

OPPOSITION'S SPLIT OVER ISLAMIC STATE WAS EXPECTED, SAYS MUSTAPA

KUALA LUMPUR, June 28 (Bernama) -- The split between PAS and DAP over the issue of the setting up of an Islamic state is expected because of the dissimilarity in ideology which is like chalk and cheese, said Umno information chief Umno Datuk Mustapa Mohamed.

He said the vast dissimilarity in ideology would remain even if they felt they were compatible with each other in an opposition pact.

"This obvious dissimilarity cannot be resolved unless one party is willing to change or give up its policy or principles," he said in a statement issued here today.

He said the statements made by PAS deputy president Abdul Hadi Awang and DAP deputy chairman Karpal Singh before this was merely to win the support of their respective supporters.

Abdul Hadi had said that PAS would definitely set up an Islamic state if it took over the country's administration in the next general election.

It led to threat from Karpal to pull the DAP out of the pact if PAS continued to hold such view.

Mustapa said Malaysia had been acknowledged as the most advanced and modern Islamic state in the world other leaders and ulama.

Meanwhile, DAP National Chairman Lim Kit Siang said the establishment of an Islamic State would be a violation of the 1999 Alternative Front Common Manifesto "Towards A Just and Democratic Malaysia".

Lim in a statement said that the setting up of an Islamic State would go against the commitment of the opposition pact to uphold the fundamental principles of the Federal Constitution and which would have to be radically altered for an Islamic State.

"I agree with Karpal that the question at this issue is not about PAS leaders giving the DAP leaders 'an intellectual explanation' about the Islamic State or DAP leaders giving 'intellectual explanation' on their objection.

"But whether the Alternative Front is prepared to respect and accept the legitimate concerns and objections of Malaysians to an Islamic State," he said.

Lim said it was not because they were anti-Islam but because they would not be able to exercise their full citizenship rights in such system of governance and their belief that a theocratic state, whether Islamic, Buddhist, Christian or Hindu would be inappropriate for a plural society like Malaysia.

Meanwhile in JELI, Mustapa said the Umno Information bureau had underlined three programmes for implementation right till the next general election, namely to streamline the activities of the thinkers group, to strengthen the the party for cyberwar and to prepare the party for psywar.

These programmes were formulated based on the input received at the party's general assembly recently, he told reporters after attending a thanksgiving at Sekolah Kebangsaan Kemahang Dua.

"The important thing is we want to ensure that the suggestions and ideas of the President (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) can be carried out," he said.

--BERNAMA

SMO RAR ABG