

27 MAR 2001

Mahathir-PAS

PAS' REFUSAL TO WITHDRAW HADI'S MESSAGE DEVIATES FROM ISLAM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 27 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said PAS' refusal to retract the so-called "Amanat Haji Hadi" or teachings of its deputy president Hadi Awang showed that the opposition party has indeed deviated from Islam's true teachings.

"They have actually used Islam to mislead and undermine Muslims' adherence to and faith in the true teachings of the religion," Dr Mahathir said replying to a supplementary question from Datuk Haji Mohamad Haji Aziz (BN-Sri Gading) at the Dewan Rakyat here today.

Mohamad inquired about the government's next course of action against political parties resorting to dirty tactics and what the people could do to check PAS' manipulations relating to Malay and national unity.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said Umno would explain PAS' tactics to the masses.

The Umno-led government believed in the democratic system and the rule of law, he said.

He said those flouting laws will face action but the government would not act rashly.

"We shall give them a chance to correct themselves especially for wrongfully branding Umno members as infidels and declaring that the party would not retract (Hadi's teachings) because these are the views of a scholar," Dr Mahathir said.

Today's newspaper reports quoted PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor as saying that the party would not withdraw Hadi's teachings which prompted PAS supporters to label Umno members as infidels over the past two decades.

Nasharuddin Mat Isa (PAS-Yan) posed a supplementary question why Umno seemed obsessed with wanting to only discuss Malay unity thus forgetting the country's plural society and yet used the multi-racial characteristic as an excuse for not implementing Islamic laws.

To this Dr Mahathir replied that the government did not at all say that Islamic laws were unimplementable in Malaysia but only maintained that enforcing such laws should be within the means of each country.

"In a country where non-Muslims form the majority, any attempt to enforce Islam laws would only create problems. Islam does not ask us to do something that causes problems," the prime minister said.

Dr Mahathir said several Islamic laws have been applied in the country.

"But PAS purposely harped on the hudud (Islamic criminal law) issue just to create problem to the government and to garner support," he said.

The prime minister said that PAS, which now runs the Kelantan and Terengganu, should try to implement all Islamic laws in the two states.

On claims of dwindling Malay support for Umno, Dr Mahathir said in real term support for Umno has not eroded as in the last general election Umno could still manage to win 72 seats against 27 won by PAS.

"We (Umno) won 72 seats, PAS won 27 seats, slightly more than before but that was because of (jailed former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's) black eye and not because of other reasons. It was not because of PAS' special abilities in forming a government that can bring about development to the country," he said.

Earlier when replying to the original question from Datuk Ruhanie Haji Ahmad (BN-Parit Sulong), Dr Mahathir said Malay unity as meant by Umno was not unity in totality to the extent that they could not have any dealings or cooperation with non-Malays at all.

-- BERNAMA
HS HS RYN