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Mahathir-PAS

PAS ANTICIPATES OBJECTIONS IN BN OVER ISLAMIC STATE DECLARATION, SAYS
PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today PAS president Datuk Fadzil Nor has anticipated objections of Umno's non-Muslim partners in the Barisan Nasional (BN) when he issued his challenge to Umno recently to declare that Malaysia is an Islamic state.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president and BN chairman, said PAS had hoped that following the declaration, an incident similar to the DAP's opposition to PAS' plan to set up an Islamic state in Malaysia would occur in the BN.

"Umno wish to state out loud that Malaysia is an Islamic country. If Malaysia is not an Islamic country because it does not implement the hudud, then there are no Islamic countries in the world," he said when opening the 30th Gerakan delegates' conference here.

Dr Mahathir said that PAS had been asked to state in writing the form and concept of the Islamic state intended to be set up by the party.

"What is PAS' reply? They will only explain the type of Islamic state and administration (they intend to set up) after they have won. This shows that they are trying to deceive the voters," he said.

The Prime Minister said that a party said to have been founded and pursuing its struggles in the name of Islam should not try resorting to deceit and he called on the people and voters, Muslims or non-Muslims alike, not to be taken in by PAS as the party often resorts to deceit.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysia would remain as a democratic nation and its multi-ethnic community was free to determine the leader of the country.

He said that the stable situation would be very much affected if the people were to choose a party supported by militant groups subscribing to the idea that democracy was not an Islamic system.

They aspire to set up a government led by a group of people claiming themselves to be ulamas who would decide all policies and laws, he said.

Dr Mahathir also called on the DAP not to play with fire as PAS, the party the DAP was consorting with, lacked confidence in democracy.

"Democratic moves will be set aside if the party were to rule. Let's hope that the DAP's pull-out from the "imitation front" is not something staged," he said.

The Prime Minister said that in the world today, there were some 50 countries accepted and recognised as Islamic countries and research conducted showed that almost all the Islamic countries could not implement the hudud.

Dr Mahathir said that even though Muslims were in power in the country, the power they held was not to oppress the non-Muslims but to ensure that the non-Muslims were treated with fairness in the country.

He said that the non-Muslims in the country never raised objections against the existing system of government which was also a system accepted by Islam as suitable for an Islamic country.

Dr Mahathir said that if Umno were to claim that Malaysia was an Islamic country, it was because in an Islamic country non-Muslims were entitled to their rights and free to practise their respective religions.

"There is no compulsion in Islam and Islam abhors chaos that may come about if Islamic laws were attempted to be enforced on non-Muslims," he said.

He said that the opposition tried to play up the issue of race and

religion to test the loyalty of certain parties in the BN and the Chinese schools issue had been used to create a rift between the Chinese parties and the Malay parties.

The Prime Minister said that if there was no legitimate way to change a government in this country, the use of force may be resorted to but in democratic Malaysia, the election was adequate to bring about a change in government like that seen in Kelantan and Terengganu which were captured by the opposition.

Dr Mahathir said that there was no reason for those who were dissatisfied to resort to violence to take over power in the country.

He then asked whether taking over power through terrorist acts an Islamic way.

The Prime Minister said that Umno would ensure that violence could never become a means to take over power in the country.

Later at a news conference, Dr Mahathir said that Malaysia had long become an Islamic country and this had been acknowledged by the ulamas and other Islamic countries.

"The world recognises us as an Islamic country. Even the Arab world recognises us as an exemplary Islamic nation where there is no oppression against non-Muslims," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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