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Parliament-Debate

PAS WILL SUBMIT ITS CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC STATE TO PM, DEWAN RAKYAT TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 22 (Bernama) -- PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor told the Dewan Rakyat here today that the party will submit its concept of an Islamic state to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad soon.

"The concept of an Islamic state will be submitted soon, and then it could be published by the media," he said during the debate on Budget 2002.

The Opposition Leader, given the opportunity to be the first to speak, said that the party was prepared to have a dialogue with Umno to discuss the Islamic state issue.

Fadzil, who spoke for three hours, proposed that pension payments should be restored to women who were previously deprived of their deceased husband's pensions when they remarry.

"I hope that the government's ruling is backdated so that more widows will again derive benefit from this facility," he said.

In tabling Budget 2002 last Friday, Dr Mahathir who is Finance Minister announced that widows will continue to enjoy their deceased husband's pensions even if they were to remarry.

He also touched on the theft of RM8 million from Tabung Haji, saying that the agency should return to basics by handling the savings of Muslims intending to perform their pilgrimage to the holy land.

Datuk Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah (BN-Tambun) said that the government should monitor cash flow in its efforts to further generate demand in the country.

He said that this was essential to curb decline in foreign demand following the global economic recession at present.

Ahmad Husni said that the government was discouraging the people from spending too much by holidaying overseas but at the same time there may be a greater flow overseas by other means.

He said that there may be local housing developers conducting investment overseas involving large capital.

Ahmad Husni questioned Fadzil for his suggestion earlier that the government grant holiday on Saturdays and Sundays to boost tourism.

He said that the suggestion was not productive because the country was facing competition from other countries.

Citing China, he said that their working days were six to seven days a week, 12 hours a day while in India, the people work 18 hours a day, seven days a week.

Ahmad Husni also proposed that a special social fund be set up to assist people who lost their jobs following the economic crisis.

He also proposed that the government investigate audit reports of government institutions or agencies to prevent what happened in Tabung Haji.

Touching on Tabung Haji, he said that with its experience in handling pilgrimages, the agency could expand its operations in other countries.

For example, he said, it could set up Tabung Haji Limited in China to handle haj arrangements by acquiring a stake.

With some 200,000 intending pilgrims each year in that country, Tabung Haji should be able to gain from the networking like the supply of food, he said.

The Dewan will sit again tomorrow.

-- BERNAMA

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