

30 SEP 2001  
Khalil-Islam

UMNO TO BRIEF BN COMPONENTS ON MALAYSIA BEING AN ISLAMIC STATE

KUANTAN, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Umno will brief Barisan Nasional component parties on Malaysia's position as an Islamic State, its Secretary-General Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said today.

He said the briefings need not necessarily be held at special sessions but in a spirit of understanding at meetings between leaders of Umno and BN component parties.

"We will brief them on the position of Islam in the context of Malaysia," he told reporters after closing the Community Development Department (Kemas) Games at Bandar Indera Mahkota here.

The Prime Minister yesterday publicly declared that Malaysia was an Islamic State in line with the teachings of Islam.

Khalil said Malaysia was already acknowledged as an Islamic State by other Islamic countries at the various conferences and also via statements by the leaders of such nations.

"The Islamic countries were satisfied when they saw the situation in Malaysia which had the criteria for an Islamic State. This also entailed an explanation from us," he said.

On the response of non-Muslims to the Prime Minister's announcement that Malaysia was an Islamic State, Khalil said based on the statements of BN component party leaders, they accepted the assurance that the government would not restrict non-Muslims from practising their respective religions.

He said what Umno was doing to uphold the position of Islam in Malaysia encompassed the administration and the laws acceptable and understood by both Muslims and non-Muslims.

He said Dr Mahathir's statement clearly answered several questions which had been raised pertaining to Malaysia being an Islamic State.

On the other hand PAS did not explain anything apart from saying that in the states in which it was in power, non-Muslims could go about the lives as usual.

Khalil said the DAP's admission that the concept of the Islamic State as upheld by Umno was more tolerant proved that there was no problem among the non-Muslims over Malaysia being an Islamic State.

DAP Life Adviser Dr Chen Man Hin in an interview published by Mingguan Malaysia today said if compared with the PAS concept of an Islamic State and that of Umno, the Umno concept was more tolerant and was acceptable to non-Muslims.

On the appointment of Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak as Pahang Umno deputy chief, Khalil said the decision was appropriate.

He said Najib was the former Menteri Besar of Pahang and also the State Umno Chief and hence he could contribute more effectively towards the party's strength in the state.

-- BERNAMA  
ROS ROS AAM