

Hadi under fire over remark

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PETALING JAYA, Mon: Terengganu Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang came under fire today over his remark that it is *haram* (forbidden) for Muslims and Islamic nations to help the United States in its attacks on Afghanistan.

His remark, which was published by a local daily today, received strong opposition from Gerakan vice-president Dr S. Vijayaratham and DAP deputy chair-

man Karpal Singh. Vijayaratham, in describing the statement as "absurd", said the US-led campaign "has nothing to do with being anti-Islam, but is purely anti-terrorist".

"Abdul Hadi also goes on to say that it is the duty of Muslims to help other Muslims in trouble. That is all very well, but what if those Muslims are murderers? Is such assistance then justified?" he asked in a statement.

Abdul Hadi's stand is untenable in a modern and pluralist society, he said, and the authorities should keep extremism in check.

Karpal said Abdul Hadi should not bestow on himself the right to make edicts, particularly when such edicts can lead to misunderstanding.

"There is no doubt that the US, in its foreign policy, has antagonised many countries and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir

Mohamad has rightly condemned it in this regard," he said in a statement.

"For Abdul Hadi to say that assisting the US could lead to a situation of *murtad* (apostasy) amounts to an expression of extremist views," he said.

"As an opposition party, PAS should take into account the stark reality of the need for the Opposition to gain the support of non-Muslims and moderate Muslims."