

PM: A ploy by PAS to gain support

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KUCHING: The Hudud and Qisas Bill, passed by the Terengganu state assembly yesterday, has been denounced by Umno as a political ploy of PAS to gain popular support.

The party felt that the PAS-controlled state government knew very well that the Federal Government was opposed to it but introduced the Bill just to gain sympathy from its supporters.

Umno president Datuk Seri

Dr Mahathir Mohamad said if it was "the law of Allah" as claimed by PAS, the Terengganu government should not have made any man-made amendments.

"This is not Allah's law but a law created by man. Man can make amendments to law introduced by man but man cannot amend the law of God," the Prime Minister told reporters at the opening of the RM60mil Masja complex

at Medan Jaya here.

He said the Syariah Criminal Offence (Hudud and Qisas) Bill differed slightly from the hudud law introduced in Kelantan, adding that in the case of Terengganu, the hudud law was just to accommodate the protest made by the public.

Describing the Bill as a "vote-getting legislation", he added: "we do not reject Allah's hudud laws, but we

reject the PAS law."

Dr Mahathir reiterated that Malaysia, being a Muslim country, was fair to all, including the non-Muslims.

In Penang, deputy Umno president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Terengganu government was so persistent about tabling its syariah laws that it had apparently not taken into consideration whether justice would truly be served.

"Whether justice will be served (under the state's hudud law) is still a question mark. They are proceeding with it to fulfil their agenda to get political support," the Deputy Prime Minister told reporters after visiting his cousin Ustaz Abdul Muthalib Raof who underwent laser surgery at a private hospital.

Asked if the Federal Government would block PAS'

attempt to implement the law, Abdullah said: "We want to see what happens first." In Petaling Jaya, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the move by Terengganu was a ploy and a hasty attempt to fulfil its elections promise.

"Their motive is without doubt for a political purpose. Actually they do not have any intention to implement the law," he said yesterday.