

Ghafar helps out in by-elections

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ALOR STAR: Tun Ghafar Baba may be in frail health in the past few years, but it has not stopped the strong-willed former deputy prime minister from making his way to Kedah to help Umno in the Pendang and Anak Bukit by-elections.

"I may not be able to box, but I can still talk and try to persuade people," he said.

He has kept up with political developments and said that he was both stunned and sad to learn of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's retirement plans.

"I have nothing but admiration for

him. But nobody can stop him, so we have to accept it."

The 74-year-old Umno veteran criticised the Terengganu hudud legislation as an attempt to trap Umno.

"It is a political ploy. I dare say so because the state is fully aware that the law contravenes the Federal Constitution.

"But still, they are rushing into it because they want to trap Umno," he said.

"PAS is hoping that the Federal Government will reject the hudud law. Then PAS can brand Umno as unIslamic.

"You cannot have two systems of law in one country. If a crime is committed, do you charge the person under the Penal Code or under hudud?"

"What will happen if a man is sentenced to death by the Federal Court but the Syariah court sets him free?" he asked.

Tun Ghafar said it saddened him to see Muslims growing intolerant of people who did not share their beliefs.

"During my time, we respected the beliefs of others. We did not try to force them to accept what we believe or condemn them for being different."