

PAS defends its two manifestos

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KUALA TERENGGANU: PAS has defended its decision to have two separate manifestos for the next general election, expected to be held early next year.

The party has come under fire for having a manifesto promising to implement Islamic laws in states ruled by PAS and another manifesto, aimed at pleasing non-Muslims, saying that it would not set up an Islamic state at the federal level.

Its acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said this was the party's practice since 1959 as there were federal and state elections.

"In states which are under our control, we will implement Islamic administration.

"If the Opposition wrests the Federal Government, we will abide with the agreement reached with other opposition parties even if we win the most number of parliamentary seats," he said.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Datuk

Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad accused PAS of tricking the people of Kelantan and Terengganu by promising them that the party would set up an Islamic state, but at the same time saying otherwise at the federal level.

Last week, Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin had also questioned PAS' motive in having two separate manifestos for the elections.

Hadi, who is Terengganu Menteri Besar, said yesterday it was too early to comment on whether the party would raise the Islamic state and *hudud* issues.

However, he said the opposition parties were still working out an agreement and that it was not true they had reached a consensus to set up a secular Malaysian state.

Responding to a statement on Sunday by DAP national deputy chairman Karpal Singh calling him a hypocrite, Hadi said he was not saddened by the remarks.

"I will only be troubled if he says that I'm sincere. I don't expect any praises from Karpal," he said.

Karpal Singh had said that it was "hypocritical" to support the provisions of Islam as enshrined in the Constitution and yet maintain a manifesto of setting up an Islamic administration in Kelantan and Terengganu as a role model for other states.

In Kuala Lumpur, MCA Youth central committee member Fam Lee Yee said that non-Muslims no longer trust PAS despite its promises.

"All the rules he has implemented in Kelantan and Terengganu have been badly accepted by the non-Muslims. PAS will turn Malaysia into Afghanistan ala Taliban if it wins at federal level," he said.

Fam, who is a lawyer, also questioned PAS' plan to make Syariah laws supreme to secular laws.