

Hadi: Hudud to be enforced soon

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MARANG: The Terengganu Syariah Criminal Offence (Hudud and Qisas) laws, passed by the State Assembly in July last year, will be enforced soon after it is gazetted next month.

Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said the enactment received the royal assent of the state's ruler, Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin, last September.

"Now, it is in the process of being gazetted. *Insyallah* (God willing), it will be completed in October, before (Prime Minister Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir (Mohamad) steps down," he told newsmen at his residence in Kampung Rusila.

Dr Mahathir had denounced the laws as a ploy by PAS to gain political support.

He said the PAS-led state government knew very well that the Federal Government was opposed to the laws but it introduced the bill just to gain sympathy from supporters.

Commenting on the state government's preparations to implement the laws, Hadi said the Syariah courts were being organised and new judges were being appointed.

"Only those who have much experience will be appointed as Syariah High Court judges," he said.

He said three sectors - the court, the prosecution and the enforcement - would be involved in enforcing the enactment, adding that enforcement bodies such as the police would investigate and conduct operations against those who commit offences.

However, he said the court would decide whether a particular crime falls

under Hudud, Qisas or *takzir* (punishment for less serious crime).

"The police are not much involved in hudud enforcement as it is the court which will decide on the cases," he said.

He said the state government would brief the police on the enactment if there was a request.

In May last year, Women and Family Development Minister Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil had said the provisions in the draft Syariah Criminal Bill on Hudud and Qisas (revenge crime restitution) were "grossly unfair" to women.

She said section 9 (2) of the bill states that women who allege rape but cannot provide clear or circumstantial evidence will be guilty of *qazaf* (slandorous accusation) and liable to be whipped 80 times.