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Mahathir-Hudud

ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF HUDUD LAW CONTRADICTS FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

BANGI, Oct 27 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Terengganu government can implement the controversial Terengganu Syariah Criminal Law Enactment (Hudud dan Qisas), but action will be taken if there is any contradiction with national laws.

The Prime Minister said the federal government did not consider the law as Hudud law but PAS law.

"They (the state government) can implement but if there is anything that contradicts national laws, we will take legal action.

"There is no cruelty in Hudud law, (but) this is cruel punishment, not Hudud," he said at a media conference after a ceremony to hand over a 'Thank You' banner to him from Puteri Umno at the Universiti Tenaga Nasional Berhad field, here today.

He said this when asked to comment on the move by the Terengganu government to gazette the enactment today, the first day of Ramadan.

The enactment, which was passed by the State Legislative Assembly in July last year and applicable to Muslims, introduced laws according to the Quran for acts such as theft, robbery, illicit sex, false allegations on illicit sex, consumption of liquor and apostasy.

When asked by the foreign press whether this was the right time to retire after a massive gathering by Puteri Umno just to give support to him, Dr Mahathir said he would leave once he had made a decision to do so.

"I will leave if I decided to leave, and I will leave," he said.

Asked if he had any unfinished business, he said: "There is always a lot of unfinished business, but I trust these young people to carry on."

When asked whether there would be more room for women in the future, he said: "I think there is a lot of room for women and I'm quite sure they will be given their place in Umno."

In fact, Umno was the first party right from the beginning after Independence to appoint a woman as a member of the party and subsequently became a minister, and Umno was ahead of any other party, he said.

Meanwhile, in his speech Dr Mahathir said the country still recognised the women's role in national development unlike in other countries.

As an example, he cited the Talibans in Afghanistan who had planned to kill women merely for attending school to pursue knowledge.

"Alhamdulillah, in Malaysia, women can still pursue knowledge and go to work. Recently, I read that the Talibans planned to kill women for going to school. They had also burnt schools in Afghanistan for they felt women should not acquire knowledge," he said.

In addition, Dr Mahathir also felt confident and said that he could retire happily with the sentiment shown by Puteri Umno which proved that the Umno struggles could continue.

"I'm confident that with the sentiment shown by Puteri, our country...Umno will be safe and the Umno cause can continue and I can happily retire because there are groups who can take over," he said.

At the function, Dr Mahathir received a 5.5 kilometre long banner with "Thank You" messages from the Puteri Umno movement following a four-month campaign after the Umno general assembly in June.

The pink banner was signed by about 50,000 people as a symbol of their appreciation to Dr Mahathir, who retires on Friday, for his excellent leadership all this while.

The banner was also recorded in the Malaysia Book of Records as the longest banner signed.

Among the events held at the function attended by about 3,000 Puteri Umno members throughout the country were parachute jumping and declamation of a poetry entitled "Ayahanda" (father) by Puteri Umno exco members.

Among those who attended the ceremony were Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob and Tenaga Nasional Berhad chairman Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussain.

-- BERNAMA

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