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'Adopt positive attitude towards implementation of Islamic laws'

reports on "International Seminar on Islamic Criminal Justice System MUSLIMS in the country should adopt a positive attitude towards efforts to enhance the administration and implementation of Islamic laws, especially the hudud, as it could not materialise within a short period of time.

The Johor Government's Information and Research head Dr Khairul Azmi Mohamad said it would be wrong to destroy everything just because of something which had yet to materialise.

Khairul said he was also puzzled when the people could accept a statement made by the first Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman, who said Islam under Article 3 of the Federal Constitution was more "ritual and ceremonial" in nature, but were not prepared to acknowledge Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that Malaysia was an Islamic State.

He said any statement made by head of state with regard to the status of a country whether it is Islam, communist or marxist would have an implication on its status. In reality, he said Malaysia was an exemplary Muslim state.

"Can we find today another Islamic State which is better than Malaysia which we can turn to as a model of Islamic administration," he said in his paper 'Hudud: The Misconception in Malaysia' presented at the International Seminar on Islamic Criminal Justice System at the Puteri Pan Pacific Hotel in Johor Baru.

The three-day seminar, which ended yesterday was jointly organised by the Johor Government and the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM).

He acknowledged the fact that no government was perfect but it was only natural as governments were run by humans.

He said the challenge faced by Malaysia was not merely to implement hudud, but the bigger challenge was to find a formula which would make it possible for the law to be promulgated with wisdom and discipline reflecting Islamic justice.

Another speaker, IKIM director-general Datuk Dr Abdul Monir Yaacob called for the setting up of Malaysian Syariah Jurisprudence Department headed by a Syariah Attorney-General.

He said the role of the department, among others, would be to advise the Federal and State governments on matters related to Islamic laws; become a centre of reference for State and Federal governments in relation to Islamic jurisprudence; and formulating Islamic laws for the government.