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State to implement hudud next month, says Hadi

MARANG, Fri. - The State Government will gazette and implement the Terengganu Syariah Criminal Offence Enactment (Hudud and Qisas) 2002 by next month and it will take effect before Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad steps down.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, disclosing this today, said he hoped this would put an end to questions by the Barisan Nasional on the issue.

Hadi was referring to the recent State Assembly where questions were raised by BN's Rosol Wahid (BN-Ajil) on why the law had not been gazetted and implemented although consent had been obtained from the Sultan of Terengganu.

He also said the Syariah Court would be restructured to ensure the law was properly interpreted in courts.

"The restructuring process will include judges, prosecutors and enforcement officers. Only those qualified will be selected to control the functioning of the court.

"A change in courts is needed to safeguard the law. Our main target is to ensure that all parties understand the enactment," he said.

Hadi, who is also Pas president, said the police would not play a major role during and after the enactment was implemented.

"We will not force them to enforce hudud in the State. It will be up to them whether or not to help us. The police will be assisted by the Syura Rakyat Committee to conduct investigations under this law."

However, he said that Pas was willing to meet the police if they were interested to help implement the law.

On another issue, Hadi said it would be a sin for Muslim journalists and senior media personnel to spread negative remarks about the enactment.

"Going against the law is like criticising the true teachings of Islam. We urge them to be fair when reporting on this issue," he said.

Hadi also claimed that a number of federal departments in the State were not co-operating with the State Government.

"This has been going on since the day Pas took over the State in the 1999 general election," he said.