

Nik Aziz congratulates Umno on Johor hudud proposal
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PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat has congratulated Umno on its assemblyperson's proposal to implement hudud law in Johor for all races, and also invited the party to join hands with PAS in pushing the agenda.

"Congratulations, Umno. I'm so grateful over this awareness," Nik Aziz is quoted as saying in a Sinar Harian report today.

The Kelantan menteri besar said whether Kelantan or Johor would be the first state to implement hudud law was not important and if Johor had the ability to the pioneer the move, "please do".

"Kelantan faces obstacles (in implementing hudud) but if Johor can do it, go ahead. Please do," he told the media in Kota Bharu yesterday.

"I hope the proposal will not be withdrawn, for I want it to become a reality."

During the Johor state assembly sitting on June 20, Umno's Kemelah assemblyperson Ayub Rahmat (left) proposed that the Islamic hudud be implemented in Johor for all races.

Contacted by Malaysiakini last week, Ayub said he wanted to see Johor to be the first state to implement "true hudud", which he said differed from PAS' version of the religious law.

The critical difference with PAS's hudud that has been legislated in Kelantan, he said, was that there would be no discrimination as it would have to cover all races in Johor.

'Work together with PAS'

However his statement was immediately blasted by MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek, who described Ayud as "out of his mind".

Nik Aziz also offered an olive branch to Umno, inviting the party to work together with PAS on this matter.

"Let's work together to showcase the real Islam to Malaysian society. Congratulations to Johor Umno and I'm waiting to see the next step."

PAS ulama chief Harun Taib also welcomed Ayub's proposal and said that PAS was willing to provide help if Umno was serious in implementing hudud.

"It has been proposed, so be serious. Don't just give empty words. If they are serious, we will also help," Harun told the Malay daily.

Former Perak Menteri Besar Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin (left) said Ayub has made a bold statement but he reminded him that implementing hudud law would be no easy task.

"It is easy to say, but the implementation will take time and require discussion and approvals from various quarters," Nizar said.

Ayub also received support from his party, including Tebrau Umno division Youth chief

Syahrin Jamaluddin, who said hudud could not be labelled as 'PAS hudud' or 'Umno hudud'.

"Hudud has a wide meaning. I agree with Ayub that hudud should be implemented because it shows there is positive suggestion.

"The government is also optimistic about its implementation. Since independence, we have been trying to implement the Islamic hudud with the establishment of the syariah court, although Islamic laws cannot be implemented completely," Syahrin is quoted as saying.

However, another Johor Umno leader, Pengerang division Youth chief Mohd Amin Hamidon, was against the proposal on grounds that it was not relevant and could not be realised in the near future.

'PAS still cannot implement hudud'

"What more when PAS, which is struggling for Islam, still cannot implement hudud, even though the party has been championing hudud as its political capital for a long time."

Ayub's statement also prompted strong responses from religious scholars.

Among others, Pahang mufti Abdul Rahman Osman urged Umno to implement hudud law at the national level and not just in Johor.

As the party that dominates the federal government, Abdul Rahman said, Umno has the ability to do so, including educating the non-Muslims about the perfection of hudud.

"It will make the situation more complicated if it is only implemented in certain states but not in the other states," he told Sinar Harian.