

Umno rep now says discuss hudud proposal 'quietly'
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Umno's Kemelah assemblyperson Ayub Rahmat, who sparked controversy by proposing that hudud be implemented on Muslims and non-Muslims in Johor, now wants the issue to be discussed behind closed doors.

Malay daily Sinar Harian reported today that Ayub now refused to discuss the matter openly as he feared that it would create confusion within Malaysian society.

"I'm worried that this issue will be misinterpreted because it requires clear and deep understanding. I'm not an expert and I need to study it more.

"This matter should be discussed among experts who specialise in Islamic laws, particularly hudud," the newspaper quotes Ayub as saying.

Ayub added that it was not his intention to gain publicity by raising the issue, and that he only wanted to raise society's awareness on it.

'True hudud differs from PAS version'

During the Johor state assembly sitting on June 20, Ayub proposed that the Islamic hudud be implemented in Johor for all the 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.

Following that, PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat welcomed the proposal and congratulated Umno.

However, Ayub's statement was immediately blasted by MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek, who said Ayub was "out of his mind".