

Anwar: BN's hudud game a diversionary tactic
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim said the playing up of the hudud issue was just a way of diverting attention from the core issues plaguing the country.

"The latest efforts to sow racial and religious distrust as evidenced by the incessant playing of the issue of hudud and the Islamic state in the Umno-controlled media once again underscores the politics of recklessness.

"These vile attempts at intimidation, incitement to religious and ethnic strife are the last desperate attempts to deflect from issues of corruption and abuse of power," he said in a statement today.

He said Pakatan Rakyat practised the "politics of consensus" and recognised the differing views of its component parties.

"As for the syariah, hudud, and the Islamic state, we recognise and respect the different views and positions of the component parties in the Pakatan.

"This is reflective of the politics of consensus. As a Muslim, I remain steadfast in my belief in the Quran and the sunnah from which the principles of the syariah are derived.

"I believe that the maqasid al syariah (the higher objectives of the syariah) are important principles of governance and are not inconsistent with the precepts of democracy," he said.

'Politics of desperation'

Stressing that Pakatan remained "committed to the fundamental principles enshrined in the federal constitution" including amongst others those on position of Islam and the rulers, as well as freedom of religion.

"Let us remain focussed on the agenda for change. We need to increase our competitiveness, the peoples' income, quality of education, health and check the increasing cost of living burdening the people.

"Let us not be waylaid by the politics of desperation and intimidation of Umno-BN," he said.

As the 13th general election draws near, BN parties and the mainstream media it controls has been playing up the issue of the implementation of hudud to pitch its key proponent PAS with Pakatan partner DAP.

The BN itself however has been unable to maintain a consistent position on the issue, with MCA vehemently opposing its implementation while certain Umno leaders have expressed an inclination towards the idea, to the point of suggesting enforcing hudud on non-Muslims as well.

Meanwhile, Umno veteran Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself has swung both ways on hudud, in his most recent position calling on PAS to join hands with Umno to “be true to their struggle”.

He was quoted in The Star last Friday saying, “There are many verses in the Al-Quran that touches on hudud law that Muslims should get to know.”

PAS spiritual leader Nik Aziz Nik Mat meanwhile reminded today that it was Mahathir’s administration that had blocked Kelantan’s move to install hudud law in 1993, with the former PM allegedly having sent a “warning” letter to the Kelantan MB on the matter.

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