

Tan: I'm unalterably opposed to hudud
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Dr Tan Kee Kwong became the first MP from PKR to publicly state his position that he is “flatly opposed” to the intention of fellow Pakatan Rakyat coalition member PAS to introduce hudud in Kelantan.

“If, and when PAS tables the Private Member’s Bill in Parliament, I will speak against it and will be flatly opposed to it,” said the MP for Wangsa Maju, who until recently chaired the disciplinary panel in his party and now heads its membership bureau.

The opposition tripartite alliance is now in a tense quandary as a result of the determination of its Islamist component to table an amendment to an enactment on the syariah enactment it passed in Kelantan in 1993.

Once passed, the amendment will enable the tabling of the Private Member’s Bill by a PAS parliamentarian at the March sitting of Parliament to pave the way for the imposition of hudud in Kelantan.

From recent soundings from Umno, it is anticipated that PAS would gain the support of Umno in this endeavour to introduce hudud in Kelantan.

“This would be an astonishing development, should it come to pass,” remarked Tan (left), a former Gerakan vice-president and deputy minister who joined PKR in 2009.

“It makes it incumbent upon everyone who supports the view that Malaysia is a secular country, with Islam as the religion of the federation, to come out in opposition to this looming development that threatens to turn this country into an Islamic state,” Tan asserted.

“This was never intended by the country’s founding fathers and by the document their deliberations produced - the 1957 federal constitution,” he elaborated.

“The move to make Malaysia an Islamic state has weighty implications for the territories of Sabah and Sarawak that merged with the rest of the federation in 1963.”

PAS move has 'gravest implications'

Tan said he found it dispiriting that PAS was insisting on going ahead with a move that has the “gravest implications for the future of our country, which is a secular state that gives Islam a special but not all-pervading role.”

He fingered Umno as the primary culprit for this “sorry state of affairs, where the notion of a secular democracy is weakened by the shoddy performance of institutions of state such as the police force and the judiciary, and by rampant corruption.”

“This shoddy performance is a consequence of the decay in Umno-BN’s overly long stay in power.

“The grave derelictions of the ruling coalition have produced this state of affairs where, as a result, the voices of theocrats gain traction while that of democrats are drowned,” Tan said.

“But while my voice is still with me, I will speak out in opposition to a move I am appalled to find has advanced this far.”

Tan went on to urge all “Malaysia’s democrats” to slough off their complacency and voice out their opposition to threats to the country’s secular democratic character, regardless of the quarter from which they emanate.

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