

Cabinet did not discuss hudud bill, reveals Nazri

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By Kamles Kumar

The cabinet did not discuss the hudud bill during its meeting last week, Tourism and Culture Minister Nazri Abdul Aziz revealed today.

And when quizzed on Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's elusive stand on the matter, he replied: "Ask him (Najib) that."

Najib has not revealed the ruling coalition's official stand on the contentious bill, despite meeting with BN leaders on March 19, the same day the amendments were passed by the Kelantan state assembly.

Following the meeting, during which the component parties aired their objection to the implementation of hudud, MCA vice-president Liow Tiong Lai said Najib would issue a statement the next day.

Speculation for the delay in an announcement from the prime minister ranged from Najib waiting for the opposition to disintegrate over the hudud squabble to BN being unable to reach a consensus on the matter.

Meanwhile, Nazri also expressed hope that the hudud quagmire would lead to the demise of the opposition bloc.

"If hudud is an issue that would break up Pakatan, I hope it would do so," he told reporters at the Parliament lobby.

Despite the brewing allegations that the government was purposely withholding its stand on hudud, Nazri said the BN coalition was not bothered.

"There are so many allegations that have been made on the government. We are not concerned about these allegations," he said.

'Terrorism law important for tourism'

Touching on the bill on the Prevention of Terrorism Act (Pota), which was tabled in Parliament yesterday, Nazri said it was important to maintain the flow of tourists to the country.

"Pota is important. If there is terrorism in a country, no one would want to visit.

"The more stringent Pota is, it is better for the country. They would know the country will not compromise when it comes to terrorists," he added.

The Pota bill was tabled by Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday to combat the growing threat of terrorist organisations, such as the Islamic State (IS).

However, the bill has come under fire from various parties, including opposition politicians, who see it as Putrajaya's new version of the repealed Internal Security Act (ISA).

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