

Hadi's motion to be tabled this week, Zahid says

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Putrajaya will allow the motion to amend the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdictions) Act (Act 355) to be debated tomorrow or Thursday, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said.

The motion submitted by PAS president and Marang MP Abdul Hadi Awang, seeks to raise the limit of penalties meted out by the Syariah Court.

If passed, the House will accept Abdul Hadi's private member's bill on the matter for first reading.

"It will be tabled this week," he told reporters after holding a meeting with Muslim MPs on the matter at the Parliament building today.

The briefing was also conducted by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of Islamic affairs Jamil Khir Baharom.

The last Dewan Rakyat session for the year ends on Thursday.

Zahid said he will submit a proposal to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to establish a parliamentary select committee to scrutinise the proposed amendments.

"Among others, we decided during the meeting to establish a select committee involving both Muslim and non-Muslim MPs.

"The committee will evaluate in detail if there are ambiguities regarding the separation of power between the Syariah and civil jurisdictions," he said.

The establishment of the select committee would require cabinet approval, he said. He added that the meeting saw proposals from several political parties.

"This is a good start. We respect religious sensitivities of others," said Zahid, while stressing that it was never Abdul Hadi's intention to cause inter-religious conflict.

Meanwhile, Pasir Puteh MP Nik Maizan Nik Mohamad said although the motion will be tabled this week, debates would only take place during the Dewan Rakyat sitting next year.

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