

Act 355 is not hudud, says Umno president

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Umno will hold a discussion with its BN component members about the tabling of the private member's bill proposed by PAS to empower the syariah court in meting out criminal sentences.

Its president Najib Abdul Razak said it was to enable the component parties to have a clear understanding on the purpose of the bill.

"As the BN government, we will discuss with BN component parties so that they will understand what is actually the purpose to amend the bill," he said at a special interview programme in conjunction with the 2016 Umno general assembly.

Najib stressed that the bill was not 'hudud' and would only be applied to Muslims.

"This enhances the syariah court's powers and it has nothing to do with non-Muslims," he said.

PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang (*photo*) had brought forth a motion on the private member's bill to amend the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965, or better known as Act 355, at the Dewan Rakyat on Nov 24.

'Ties between Umno and PAS improving'

Najib also said that the relationship between Umno and PAS, which has been strained, is now improving, including at the grassroots level.

The prime minister said this was because PAS was now more open and committed in the struggles on issues, particularly those involving the interests of the people and the future of the country.

"Similarly with Umno, the party is also maintaining a similar stand on numerous issues involving the people and the future of the country.

"There are instances where we have similar opinions but we have yet to reach a situation as in 1974, where we had a coalition government and so on," Najib added in the interview.

He pointed out that Umno and PAS were struggling through their respective party platforms.

"We move as a group in our respective parties. There are instances where we have differences in opinion, there are times where we have different stands but there are also instances where we can have a common stand," he said.

Hadi had earlier pointed out that PAS had the right to forge cooperation with anyone or any

political party, including Umno.

The cooperation with Umno, Hadi said, was more focused on matters pertaining to the upholding of Islamic teachings in the interests of Muslims in the country and this cooperation was not based on political interests.

- *Bernama*

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