

S'wak passes new measure to curb unhealthy politics
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Sarawak is expected to become the first state in the country to come up with its own set of regulations or guidelines to curb unhealthy political practices that may disrupt racial harmony or cause religious tension.

The Sarawak state assembly today passed a motion for the state government to prepare and publish a "White Paper".

Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah (BN-Asajaya) during his winding-up speech after tabling the motion said the proposed "White Paper" should be formulated by the state government as unhealthy trends in politics that was confined to Peninsula Malaysia has crept into the local political scene, based on experience in Batang Ai and Sibul by-elections.

"What we are debating today is not creating new laws but proposing to come up with the 'White Paper'," he said.

Quoting a definition from online encyclopedia Wikipedia, Abdul Karim said "White Paper" is an authoritative report or guide often oriented towards a particular issue or problem and used to educate readers and help the people make decisions, and often requested and used in politics, policy, business and technical fields.

Abdul Karim said the proposed "White Paper" should not be seen as a regulation or guideline that confined only to opposition party but applied to all, irrespective of their political belief.

When replying to a question from Wong Ho Leng (DAP-Bukit Assek), he said it was a normal phenomena for the federal or state government to announce new or ongoing projects that were requested by the people, during election campaigns.

"Its not corruption, we are doing it because it was requested by the people," he said adding that even opposition-run states like Penang, Selangor and Kelantan were doing the same.

He cited the recent Kelantan state government's move to issue land titles during the Galas by-election and added that similar trend or tactics had been used during the Permatang Pauh by-election.

Earlier, when tabling the motion, he said the proposed "White Paper" should cover individuals, organization and media to prevent the escalation of dangerous politics employed by outsiders, especially politicians.

Meanwhile, the assembly rejected Wong's, who is also the opposition leader, attempt move two motions, one on the Rejang River logjam and the other to deduct RM100 per month from all ministers and assistant ministers' salaries for neglecting their responsibilities to provide written answers.

- Bernama

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