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PAS and allies: Anyone can use 'Allah', just don't misuse word

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PETALING JAYA: PAS, along with its allies in the Opposition pact, has taken a stand — the word "Allah" can be used by anyone for as long as it is not misused against the Muslim community.

"The *kalimah* Allah, in its original Quranic term which means 'the One and Only God', should not be misused by others against the Muslim community to the point of creating confusion," PAS president Datuk Seri

Abdul Hadi Awang said yesterday. "Therefore, Muslims of all races steadfastly use the name Allah, without any interpretation, when translating the Quran in their respective languages and during worship.

"Nevertheless, Islam does not stop followers of other religions from using the word Allah in practising their faith, although it might not be equitable to the actual meaning of the original Quranic word."

Abdul Hadi was speaking at a press conference at the end of a discussion on the issue, which also

involved PKR adviser Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang.

The three parties took a common stand on the matter, hours after the Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah announced a decree banning non-Muslims in the state from using the word "Allah".

Abdul Hadi quoted the Al-Quran, from the verse of *Al-Imran*, that the People of the Book do not worship any God but Allah and they do not take priests, monks and leaders as figures to worship and idolise.

Abdul Hadi accused Umno, which represents Muslims in the country and the ruling Barisan Nasional, of using the word "Allah" as an issue and polemic via the mainstream media in the run-up to the general election.

Asked about the Sultan's decree, announced by Selangor Islamic Affairs Council (Mais) secretary Datuk Mohd Misri Idris earlier in the day, the PAS president declined to comment.

However, Anwar was unperturbed that the decree would put the

Pakatan Rakyat in conflict with the council.

"Mais moves freely and has nothing to do with the state government," he said.

"Their statements need not necessarily reflect the views of the state government.

"The PAS statement on the matter is clear as it reflects their interpretation and understanding of the issues involving the use of 'Allah' by non-Muslims," said Anwar, adding that the word should not be abused by any quarters, including the church.