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Dr M: Pas' hudud un-Islamic

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'UNFAIR':
Proposed law
unjust, against
Islamic principles

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Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says Pas' intention in implementing hudud is not to uphold Islam

TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday took aim at Pas' ambition to enact hudud, calling the proposed law "un-Islamic" and used only as a ploy to win votes.

The former prime minister said by creating two sets of laws, one for Muslims and another for non-Muslims, hudud, as proposed by Pas, was fundamentally unjust and against the principles of Islam.

"In the Quran, there are 43 verses stressing that when you judge, you must judge with justice.

"Under Pas' hudud, if a Muslim steals something, his hand will be chopped off, but if a non-Muslim steals something, he gets two

months' jail.

"Do you think that is fair? If it is not fair and just, it is not Islam.

"This is not Islamic hudud, it is Pas' hudud," he said in response to a question from the audience at the

"What youth should know" leadership conference here.

Dr Mahathir said Pas' intention for implementing hudud was not to uphold Islam, but to raise their chances of winning elections.

He also criticised Kelantan Umno leaders who voted for hudud's implementation for failing to see the law's weaknesses.

"Pas' *niat* (intention) is not for Islam, it is about winning elections by proving themselves as more Muslim than Umno."

"In Islam, your intention is very important. Once you do something for political reasons, it is no longer Islamic."

He said it was not viable to implement hudud in Malaysia as the country was a multiracial country.

"The common law is there to uphold justice, and when you uphold justice, you are obeying the teachings of the Quran."

Dr Mahathir also questioned the proposed law's inclusion of stoning as a punishment, saying the practice was never mentioned in the Quran.

"The Quran doesn't call for stoning to death. Stoning appears in the

hadith (Prophet's sayings), and even then, there are only two unique cases in which it is mentioned.

"As a Muslim, when you start something, you first say '*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*', which means 'In the name of God, the most merciful and compassionate'. Is it merciful or compassionate to stone people to death?"

Dr Mahathir was speaking after delivering his keynote speech on "Vision 2020: Mistakes made, lessons learnt and ways to move forward".

During the question-and-answer session, he shared his thoughts on various topics, including the country's history, the economy, media censorship, and the passing of former Singapore prime minister Lee Kuan Yew.

He admitted that he and Lee had never been close, disagreeing on many issues that affected their respective countries.

"We weren't firm friends. When I was prime* minister, we had 20 problems with Singapore that were never resolved. I spent 22 years trying to solve these problems, but

we never did."

He also dismissed those who compared Singapore's successes to Malaysia's, saying that Singaporeans faced much higher costs of living despite earning higher incomes.

"We are not so far behind in terms of purchasing power and the cost of living here is much cheaper.

"What we earn here stretches further than what Singaporeans earn, even though their income is three times higher."

To a 12-year-old participant who asked about the future of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir replied: "The future is what you make of it. You need to understand what makes a country great and work towards it."

He, however, cast doubt on whether Malaysia could call itself a developed nation by 2020.

"To me, a developed country cannot just be wealthy.

"It needs to have the right industries and an educated population, maybe even one or two Nobel Laureates, who are recognised for their contribution to the world's knowledge."