



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who is also finance minister, speaking to reporters after the Finance Ministry's monthly assembly yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

TALKS BARRED IN MOSQUES, SURAU

RESPECT KING'S DECREE, ANWAR TELLS HADI

Going against order on political sermons in mosques will allow others to question position of sultans

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PAS president Tan Sri Abdul Hadi Awang should respect the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's decree that

there should be no political talks or sermons given in mosques and surau.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said if Hadi was allowed to talk about it constitutionally, then there would be a way for him to talk about the position of the Malay Rulers,

"This barring (of politicians giving talks in mosques) applies to everyone, including the prime minister.

"I have to get out of a mosque if I want to talk about politics because the religious jurisdiction of a state is under the powers of the Malay Rulers.

"Therefore, he (Hadi) has to understand this. If he does not agree, he can present a memorandum to Tuanku.

"Do not attack us because I myself am barred (from giving po-

litical talks in mosques)," he said.

Anwar said Hadi must respect the decision of the sultans and the respective state religious authorities, which barred politicians from giving political talks in mosques.

"If we talk about it constitutionally, there is a way for him (Hadi) to talk about the position of the Malay Rulers, whether in the case of what happened in Terengganu or Selangor; or in this case, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah," he said.

Hadi, who is Perikatan Nasional deputy chairman, had reportedly said it was not an offence for politicians to give political talks in mosques and surau.

He said it was the responsibility of a leader to touch on Islamic politics as politics and religion could not be separated.

The Terengganu Islamic Religious and Malay Customs Council had recently issued an order prohibiting religious lectures, talks and political activities by politicians in all mosques and surau statewide.

Despite the ban in Terengganu, Hadi was unfazed, saying he would continue to give lectures as usual in places of worship.

Anwar said the suitan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, at the Islamic Religious Affairs meeting on Monday, had also said that mosques should be "livelier" but should not be made into a political venue.

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DATUK SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
prime minister

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"The rationale of the state (Selangor) was that religious talks were laced with too much politics and about (political) parties," he said.

Anwar said he had declined invitations from various mosques committees and imam to talk in mosques during his Friday prayers.

"I respect the orders of the respective religious departments based on the decision of their rulers. So, I refrain (from talking in mosques) and I will just shake hands with members of the congregation," he said.