

Pakatan: Hudud only if all parties agree
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 29 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) agreed today that the contentious hudud or Islamic criminal law is not part of its joint policy until all parties agree to it, stepping back from the brink of a major difference that broke an earlier opposition coalition.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim told a press conference just after midnight that the set of Islamic laws was “certainly now not PR policy and DAP’s objection has to be respected.”

Anwar said PR will continue to allow its members to air different views. — File pic
“Yes, very clear, it has to be together,” the PKR de facto leader replied to a question on whether any move to implement hudud would need the unanimous agreement of all three parties in the pact.

He had earlier backed imposing the law in Kelantan, just like political foe Umno whose former leader Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad dredged up the issue last week.

Close to 30 top PR leaders had met for over three hours last night to resolve the longstanding hudud issue which has seen the DAP and PAS repeatedly at loggerheads.

Dr Mahathir, who opposed hudud when Kelantan passed the law in 1993, dared Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat, the state’s menteri besar, to implement hudud now that the country’s longest-serving prime minister was no longer in power.

The PAS spiritual leader then called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to propose amendments to the federal constitution to allow the Islamic law, which prescribes stoning, whipping and amputation as punishment for criminal offences.

But the DAP has insisted that it is not part of PR’s common policy, leading to the three-year-old pact’s unity being questioned.

Secretary-general Lim Guan Eng vowed this week that his entire central leadership would resign their posts if hudud became part of the coalition’s joint stand.

PR issued a gag order earlier this week, barring their members from speaking on the issue until the pact’s emergency meeting last night.

Anwar also said PR will continue to allow its members to air different views but that no policy would become part of its common platform without the consensus of all.

“Why must PAS be denied the right to articulate their views? We cannot deny the right of any party to bring forward any view. PR respects PAS’s initiative and aspiration but we have to reach a consensus,” the former deputy prime minister said.

He added that he could not understand “why (hudud) cannot be discussed? Why the strong

abhorrence?"

The Permatang Pauh MP also said that the hudud enactments that were passed in PAS-ruled Kelantan and Terengganu in 1993 and 2003 respectively were done before PR had been formed.

Anwar said that "both enactments are there, but it requires PR consensus and an amendment to the constitution. DAP is not supportive of that particular position."

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