

**PM pledges no hudud in Malaysia**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**September 24, 2011**  
**By Debra Chong**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 24 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak vowed today the federal government will staunchly block any attempts to enforce Islamic law, or hudud, effectively ending a budding debate on the subject that has pitted non-Muslim parties against their Muslim allies ahead of national polls.

The Islamic code is not suitable to be implemented because the government has to be realistic about the country's current situation, the prime minister told reporters in Tanjung Tualang during a day-trip to Perak earlier today.

"If we ask the ulamas (Muslim clerics), Islamic law cannot be implemented unless we take into consideration the environment and the reality.

"Moreover, the aim of an administration according to Islam is based on maqasid syariah, which entails protecting the religion, life, moral and property, among others," Najib was reported as saying by The Star Online.

The sixth PM insisted that elements of hudud have already been incorporated in the existing system "minus the extreme part".

He added that the principle and objective of maqasid syariah could be championed under the existing legal system.

Hudud is a prickly subject in multicultural Malaysia where race and religion are closely-linked. The country's 28-million population is also still haunted by the bloody racial riots of May 13, 1969.

Najib (picture) is the second PM to take a strong stand against hudud, after fourth prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who had blocked Kelantan's attempts to implement the Islamic laws in the state.

Kelantan Mentri Besar Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat has since challenged Najib to revise the country's top laws to allow the state implement hudud there.

Today, major dailies in the country front-paged the hudud flap involving parties on both sides of the political divide.

Mainstream newspapers appear to suggest that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) is now scrambling to contain its loss of support from the Malay community as a response to PAS deputy president Mohammad Sabu's alleged remarks over Bukit Kepong tragedy.

But the exchanges have not been entirely across the aisle. Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's expressed support for hudud earlier this week also appears to have upset Barisan Nasional's Chinese partners.

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek has threatened pull his party out of the ruling

coalition if senior ally, Umno, goes ahead with enforcing hudud. Gerakan has expressed the same threat.

On PR's side, DAP has likewise maintained they will not support PAS's longstanding bid to implement Islamic law.

Muhyiddin, who is also Umno deputy president, later tempered his remarks by saying it was not yet time to introduce such laws to multi-racial and multi-religious Malaysia.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has also backed the introduction of hudud in Kelantan, which he said would not infringe upon non-Muslims' rights.

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