

**DAP may oppose hudud but Umno rejects it, says Hadi**  
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**By Debra Chong**

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 14 — The DAP may be opposed to hudud but Umno has rejected the Islamic penal code, PAS president Datuk Seri Hadi Awang has said, as he defended his Pakatan Rakyat (PR) ally that had come under relentless attacks from ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders and religious hawks in the run-up to crucial national polls.

Pointing out the position of PR parties, he said that "just as DAP cannot force PAS members to consume alcohol or pork, PAS too cannot prevent DAP members from consuming alcohol or pork.

"The PAS constitution compels us to sack any member who consumes alcohol or pork. The Umno constitution does not compel the sacking of its members for drinking with the MCA, MIC and Gerakan," Hadi said.

Several conservative Islamic muftis and religious scholars had dubbed the DAP a party full of "kafir harbi" or belligerent infidels and directed Malaysia's dominant Muslim voters that it is "haram" or forbidden to support them at the 13th general election that must be called by next April.

"In reality, this term 'hudud' has returned and been made an electoral issue by Umno to create conflict among the people, without feeling responsibility towards Islam's pure guidance," the PAS president said in an article published yesterday in its party paper Harakah.

He noted that the DAP has been portrayed as a party opposed to hudud by the mainstream media controlled by the BN government when it is Umno, the ruling coalition's mainstay, that has rejected the enforcement of the Islamic penal code.

In his article titled "Hudud: DAP Menentang, Umno Menolaknya (Hudud: DAP Opposes, Umno Rejects)", Hadi said that there were no issues with PAS working with the secular party even though the DAP has repeatedly stated that it will not brook the creation of an Islamic state or support the enforcement of the religious criminal code that prescribes, among others, the amputation of hands for theft.

He said that even though the DAP and PAS held opposing views on setting up an Islamic state and enforcing hudud, the two parties could still work together on common issues to improve the governance of the country.

"PAS has stated its policy openly and DAP has also stated its fight openly and we dialogue openly. Therefore PAS is able to co-operate on common issues without forbidding and forcing matters that are different," he said.

"There are issues where we can give-and-take and there are issues that we will not move away from," he added.

He also gave a reminder that even though PAS has hudud laws in two states, Kelantan and Terengganu, it was only for Muslims.

"Tiada paksaan menerima hudud untuk bukan Islam. There is no compulsion to accept hudud for non-Muslims," he said.

Hadi pointed out that PAS would never force its religious views on non-followers of Islam and that hudud laws were passed by a majority vote after having been debated properly in the respective state assemblies according to the rules of democracy, even though their enforcement has been strongly blocked by the federal government.

He pointed that soon after the Kelantan government passed hudud, it received a warning letter from the Umno-controlled federal government.

Hadi said that both the PAS-led state and its neighbour Terengganu had been taken to court by Umno leaders to block the enforcement of hudud.

"Hudud was rejected by Umno.

"This is the difference in the two approaches.

"DAP rejects hudud by presenting arguments while MCA rejects hudud by yelling accusations Umno has lost its mind," the Marang MP said.

While Islam is recognised as the religion of the federation, the Federal Constitution protects the rights of citizens to practise freely the religion of their choice.

PR has slammed Malay daily Utusan Malaysia for stoking "religious conflict" after the Umno-owned paper ran a controversial report on its front page on August 8 titled "Haram sokong DAP" (Forbidden to support DAP).

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim told reporters the Malay broadsheet's reports were a political campaign by religious extremists to instil disaffection towards PR parties, pointing out that the ruling BN, including its lynchpin Umno, has previously said it was against carrying out "hudud", the Islamic penal code that metes out harsh punishment for offenders.

He said the reports by Utusan were a "campaign by religious extremists to punish the DAP" for not supporting the enforcement of hudud.

The Pahang mufti has also backed a growing campaign among Umno-aligned religious leaders, declaring it "haram" (forbidden) for Muslims to support the DAP after several Islamic scholars called the secular party "kafir harbi" or belligerent infidels, distinguishing it from the MCA or MIC as parties that have accepted the faith's supremacy in multireligious Malaysia.

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