

**Islamic state 'impossible' in multiracial Malaysia, says MCA man**  
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**By Leslie Lau**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 24 — Veteran MCA politician Datuk Lee Hwa Beng hosed down today his party's claims that a vote for DAP could lead vicariously to the implementation of hudud law, pointing out that it was "impossible" for any winner of Election 2013 to set up an Islamic theocratic state.

Without naming any party, he noted that there were politicians who relied on fear-mongering tactics among the Chinese community by warning them that an Islamic state will result if the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) coalition comes into power or, alternatively, if there is a coalition of Umno and PAS.

MCA, hit by widespread unpopularity among the Chinese electorate, has made the possibility of an Islamic state a central plank of its campaign in Election 2013.

The party has placed a number of newspaper advertisements suggesting that a vote for DAP is a vote for hudud, the Islamic penal law, especially after the PR party said it had considered using the logo of PAS in the general election following now-dispelled doubts about its ability to apply its own symbol.

Lee, the former Port Klang Authority (PKA) chairman who gained public acknowledgement for his role in investigating the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) scandal, pointed out that any change to the Federal Constitution required a two-thirds majority in Parliament.

He said in a letter to The Malaysian Insider today that the number of seats contested by the various political parties, including the main Muslim parties of Umno and PAS, suggest that it was impossible to amend the constitution as needed for an Islamic state.

Lee based this on the assumption that all non-Muslim MPs would not vote for any amendment to introduce an Islamic theocratic state.

"For example in the Terengganu state assembly some years ago when PAS introduced hudud law, the lone MCA member abstained from voting for it whereas, in contrast, all the Umno members voted for it," he said.

He pointed out that even if Umno won all 105 parliamentary seats it was contesting in the peninsula and the 15 in Sabah, and if Sarawak's PBB took 14 seats there, these would still total only 134.

This, he pointed out, remains short of the two-thirds majority — 148 seats — needed to amend the constitution.

He added that while it may appear possible if Umno, PAS and PBB formed a coalition, it should be noted that PAS and Umno were competing for many of the same seats.

"My conclusion is that an Islamic theocratic state is impossible in our multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural country, safeguarded by our societal constitution and the Federal Constitution itself."

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