

Hudud: Committee Should Just Involve Independent Religious Persons, Says Mahathir
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PUTRAJAYA, May 6 (Bernama) -- The central technical committee on the implementation of hudud or Syariah criminal law should comprise proper and independent religious individuals who are not involved in politics, says former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said this was to avoid prejudiced views towards the committee and to ensure that the implementation of hudud did not benefit a certain party.

"The main thing is to have proper religious persons who are not involved in politics who will study this matter and give their opinions. But not those who are obviously making use of hudud to win votes."

Dr Mahathir said this to reporters after observing the Syariah High Court proceeding, here, today against former politician and social activist Dr Kassim Ahmad who was charged with insulting Islam and defying the religious authorities.

On May 2, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said a central technical committee would be set up soon to study the implementation of hudud in Kelantan.

Jamil Khir said the setting up of the committee would involve the federal government, Kelantan government and PAS.

Apart from studying every aspect of the implementation of the law, the committee will also explain the matter to all levels, including to political parties.

Mahathir, meanwhile, also hoped that the controversy in the implementation of hudud would help people understand what "hudud is all about and how it is applied in a multiracial and multireligious society".

On MCA rejecting hudud and whether it would break up Barisan Nasional, Dr Mahathir did not think it would affect the ruling coalition that way.

"Umno believes hudud as one that is found in the Quran and hadith. But when it is used by a political Party (PAS), they are bound to interpret it in a biased manner," he said.

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