

Hudud not fair unless applied to all, says Dr M
The Malay Mail Online
June 17, 2014

KUALA LUMPUR, June 17 — The enforcement of hudud only on Muslims and not on followers of other religions would create inequality that goes against the notion of fairness in Islam, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said, But the former prime minister also warned that attempting to apply the Islamic penal code on multicultural Malaysia would lead to its own set of problems.

“If (you) want hudud, then it has to be enforced on everyone, but if that is done, it will create a lot of instability and give rise to problems in the society, that is not what Islam wants, because Islam is for fairness,” he was quoted as saying yesterday by Chinese language newspaper *Sin Chew Daily*.

Dr Mahathir also added that applying hudud with its relatively more severe punishments on Muslims alone would be unfair to adherents of Islam.

“Because a Muslim who committed theft, his hand will be amputated, and the Chinese who commits the same theft will only be jailed for two months, that is unfair. If it is unfair, it doesn’t fit Islam’s teachings,” he said.

Yesterday, PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said the critics who mock and call hudud laws as unjust are “ignorant”.

Harakah Daily, the PAS organ, quoted Hadi as saying that the wisdom behind the severe physical punishments such as stoning and the amputation of limbs prescribed under hudud was to instil fear and deter crime, saying that many criminals will repent instead of racing to commit crimes.

He pointed out that hudud punishments have very strict prerequisites, and that judges would do their best to acquit criminals instead.

The debate over hudud is raging once more in Malaysia after PAS made known its plan to enforce the Islamic criminal law in the state of Kelantan that it has governed since 1990.

Last month, PAS said it will delay tabling two Parliamentary private members’ bills needed to pave way for the enforcement of hudud in Kelantan, to allow a proposed national-level committee to study the implementation of the Islamic penal code.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, the deputy prime minister and also the Umno deputy president had said his party will push for a national-level committee on hudud, with local and foreign experts on the Islamic penal code to be on the panel.

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