

Najib can resolve BN opposition to Shariah Bill, PAS sec-gen says

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Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang's Bill was tabled in Parliament last week, drawing objections from non-Muslim ministers and lawmakers, including BN parties MCA, MIC, Gerakan as well as its East Malaysian components. – Picture by Saw Siow Feng

KUALA LUMPUR, May 31 — PAS secretary-general Datuk Takiyuddin Hassan has faith that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak will overcome rumblings from within the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties opposed to Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang's bid to amend the Shariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965.

The PAS president's Bill was tabled in Parliament last week, drawing objections from non-Muslim ministers and lawmakers, including BN parties MCA, MIC, Gerakan as well as its East Malaysian components Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah and Parti Rakyat Sarawak, among others.

"They are a part of BN. So, it is better for the BN leadership to handle them.

"As far as we are concerned, the government has already given us the greenlight to table the bill in Parliament," Takiyuddin was reported by *The New Straits Times* as saying in a report today.

PAS president Hadi's Bill was unexpectedly expedited to Dewan Rakyat last Thursday after an Umno minister proposed to elevate it in Parliament's agenda, which Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia approved after saying it would otherwise never have "seen the light of day".

The private member's Bill proposes empower Shariah courts to enforce punishments other than the death penalty.

Several BN component parties have since voiced their objection, with MCA, MIC and Gerakan leaders threatening to quit their Cabinet positions if the Bill was passed.

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