

**Amanah: Deafening silence by PAS as Hadi's bill deferred**  
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**Raja Bahrin Shah questions why Terengganu, with only Umno and PAS reps in state assembly, still refuse to implement Syariah law criminal code, despite having royal consent.**

PETALING JAYA: Amanah's Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah finds it strange that not a single PAS MP objected when the debate over the party's syariah amendment bill in the Dewan Rakyat was deferred to the next sitting by the Speaker last Thursday.

The Kuala Terengganu MP said it was ironic that legislators from Pakatan Harapan parties displayed indignation at the move by Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia instead of those from PAS after the party itself had pushed for the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act, or Act 355.

He said this showed how Parliament was being used as a "sandiwara" or stage play by PAS and Umno.

"What happened was highly shameful and insulting to Islam, when for the third time the debate and voting on the Act 355 bill was postponed," he said.

"What is most bizarre is that when it was deferred for the third time, not a single parliamentarian from PAS stood up to object to it but the PH members were objecting.

"Why were they mute in Parliament, when their voices would be raised loudly at mosques and village suraus to seemingly fight against the government?" he asked in a statement today.

He noted that the private members' bill by PAS president and Marang MP Abdul Hadi Awang was brought forward on the Dewan Rakyat's agenda at the end of the past two Parliament sittings but was deferred before it could be tabled for debate or voting on both occasions.

The bill was originally meant to be presented by Hadi in May last year but he requested to defer it to the next sitting. He later amended it for the November sitting by proposing to have punishments meted out by syariah courts increased to a maximum of 30 years imprisonment, fines of up to RM100,000 and up to 100 strokes of the cane.

Currently, syariah criminal punishment is capped at a prison term of three years, fines of up to RM5,000 and six strokes of the cane.

“After the sessions, PAS went rallying noisily in villages and across states on how it had succeeded in persuading Umno to implement shariah laws,” Raja Bahrin said.

He stressed that PAS was behaving that way even though its former spiritual adviser Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, who passed away in February 2015, had emphasised that the party should not “fall into the same pit twice” after having been manipulated by Umno in the past.

Raja Bahrin also expressed surprise at some PAS MPs displaying tears when Hadi read the Act 355 bill text on Thursday, but were not inspired to do the same when the matter was deferred.

“If PAS was so determined to strengthen shariah law then why were they not sad and angry at this incident (the deferment)?” he asked.

Raja Bahrin also pointed to a call by PAS’ Batu Burok assemblyman Syed Azman Syed Ahmad Nawawi in March for the Terengganu state assembly to hold a special session to debate why a shariah enactment in the state has not been implemented although it had received royal assent and was gazetted 15 years ago.

Syed Azman had submitted a motion to discuss why the Syariah Criminal Offence (Hudud and Qisas) Terengganu Enactment 2002 had not been implemented after it was passed by the assembly on July 7, 2002.

He noted that it had received royal approval from the Sultan of Terengganu on Sept 2, 2002, and was gazetted on Sept 25 that same year.

He noted that of the 32 seats in the state assembly, PAS holds 14 and Umno holds 17.

“Are not the main ‘obstructors’ (to heavier shariah law) DAP, Amanah and MCA absent in Terengganu with no seats in the state? What is the problem?” he said, adding that Terengganu also happens to be Hadi’s own home state.

“When the motion was rejected by the state Speaker and Umno, strangely enough the PAS assembly members did not lend support to Syed Azman,” he added.

He questioned if the 15-year old enactment was only used by PAS as a “political stock” to wield influence in the state.

Borrowing a quote used by Pandikar on Thursday, he said Umno and PAS were trying to make “bloody fools” of their supporters and the people in general.

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