KUALA LUMPUR: PAS, that is adamant in implementing the hudud laws in Kelantan by moving a private bill in Dewan Rakyat, continues to earn the wrath of its partners in Pakatan Rakyat namely the DAP and Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR).

PAS’ hudud seems to be the bone of contention for the opposition pact to the extent DAP has given its piece of mind to PAS that it is only proper that the Islamic party quit the Pakatan pact established in 2008.

PKR’s de facto head Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who earlier had said PAS was free to go ahead with the laws governing Islamic way of punishment for certain offences but PKR and DAP were not obliged to support the private bill in Dewan Rakyat, now seems to be at a loss.

In the latest development, Anwar said PAS has to bring the matter with Pakatan Rakyat Supreme Council before tabling the bill in Parliament.

Political observers see DAP and PKR have no respect to the private bill, PAS still needs support of the two-thirds majority to get its bill through the Parliament in June.

Even if all Muslim Member of Parliament (MPs) within PAS, Umno and PKR give their support to the private bill, PAS still needs support from another 23 MPs to see the two-thirds majority to amend the Federal Constitution.

In realising the hudud, PAS is fully aware that it cannot do it alone and needs the support of 148 MPs to amend the constitution.

At present, PAS has 21 MPs while Umno has 88, and still falls short of the two-thirds majority needed. Even if the 16 Muslim MPs in PKR lend their support, it is still a tall order for PAS. PKR has a total of 29 MPs in Dewan Rakyat.

On the government’s part, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak on April 24 was quoted saying that the government had never rejected hudud but there were many things to look into before it is implemented.

The Umno president said there were many shortcomings and priorities that have to be dealt with beforehand and fine-tuned before hudud could be implemented in the true spirit of Islam.

The communication and media studies faculty lecturer from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in Shah Alam Associate Professor Dr Ismail Sualman noted that PAS is fully aware that getting the two-thirds support in Parliament is an uphill task, yet it decided to go ahead.

Claiming that it is a political ploy, he said that PAS is trying to exonerate itself from any blame when the private bill fails to see the light of the day.

"Parliament will be blamed. They will say PAS has taken its hudud bill up to the Parliament but has yet to see the two-thirds majority," he said.

Elaborating further, Ismail noted that it would have been better for PAS to table a draft or brief on the hudud that it wanted to implement.

"However, is the hudud that the party is seeking to implement is in line with Al Quran or it is just PAS’ own brand of hudud? This is what we need to know because it is not that we are not agreeable with hudud but it is not time yet and the society is still on the dark over hudud," he said.

Then is PAS ready to lose its ally with its adamant stand on hudud? At the least this will serve as a face saving gesture for PAS.

DAP’s National Organising Secretary Loke Siew Fook was reported saying that PAS has to leave the pact if it was still adamant with its decision to implement hudud in Kelantan.

Che Hamdan is confident that PAS will not take drastic measures and leave Pakatan as it is a threat for its own political survival.

"And there is nothing new of PAS’ inconsistencies in its policies like the flip-flop from Islamic State to Welfare State. Then there are the two faction in PAS, one all out to implement hudud and the other want it to be postponed and this has put Pakatan Rakyat in a
fix,” he said.

The political analyst said the PAS-DAP conflict over the hudud only provided a political mileage for DAP and would help the party win over more Chinese votes during the Bukit Gelugor parliamentary by-election on May 25. “This is the time for DAP to show its unwavering stand over the issue as the Chinese voters closely watch the developments,” he said.

The Bukit Gelugor by-election is being held after its incumbent, Karpal Singh, former DAP Chairman, died in a road accident on April 17. — Bernama