

Ex-mufti slaps down 'hang Shuhaimi' call
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The call by some quarters to hang "traitorous" PKR Seri Muda assemblyperson Shuhaimi Shafiei for allegedly insulting the Selangor sultan not only goes against Islamic teachings, but is among the biggest sins in Islam.

This is the view of former Perlis mufti Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin, who explained his stance in a hard-hitting statement.

"This suggestion is more insulting and a bigger sin compared with encouraging a ruler to commit adultery, gamble or consume alcohol," said Asri, who is associate professor at Universiti Sains Malaysia.

"This is because in Islam, life is precious and taking a life without a valid reason is forbidden. This suggestion encourages the ruler to kill without the reasons allowed by Allah and the Prophet.

"In Islam, the sin of killing is bigger than adultery, consuming alcohol and other sins."

Asri did not name anyone in attributing the suggestion to "an elected representative and NGOs".

However, it has been reported that Kulim-Bandar Baharu MP Zulkifli Noordin, Gerakan Anti Penyelewengan Selangor (Gaps) and Selangor Perkasa had issued the call.

On Monday, the two groups lodged a police report against Shuhaimi.

They asked that Shuhaimi be hauled up under Section 121 of the Penal Code for inciting "war on the Malay rulers".

Treason under the provision is an offence punishable by death.

Shuhaimi had made his comments in relation to the chaos created by the appointment of the new Selangor state secretary.

The reaction of state leaders has since earned them a slap on the wrist from the Selangor palace.

Criticising a sultan 'not a sin'

Asri stressed that criticising a sultan is not forbidden in Islam.

"A sultan is not a prophet who is protected from committing errors and thus cannot be criticised. The belief in some quarters that it is forbidden to criticise or to hold different opinions from a sultan is like equalling the status of a Malay ruler with that of the Prophet."

He cited the first four Islamic caliphs - Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali - who were far

nobler than the sultans but who did not shrink from criticism or protests from the people. Instead, they answered detractors with wisdom and integrity.

"By God! The dust on the nose of the horses of the Prophet's Companions who struggled alongside the Prophet is far nobler than most of the sultans and kings in this world.

"They never called for their detractors to be killed, but rather thanked them. Even in the lifetime of the Prophet, there were occasions when his Companions disagreed with him and objected to his opinions. But the Prophet did not kill them."

Asri described those who had made the suggestion as "sycophants who have gone overboard".

"If they are Muslims, they are people who have lost their feelings and do not fear God (over the shedding) of the blood of others.

"Perhaps they have argued so much based on their understanding of the (civil) laws that they have forgotten the laws of God that forbid the taking of blood or life of a human being, except for reasons that are valid according to the religion.

"They must repent and withdraw the suggestion," he added.

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