

**MCA member behind azan row apologises**  
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The MCA member at the epicentre of the row over volume of the azan (call to prayer) at the Al-Ikhlasih mosque in Kampung Kerinchi, Kuala Lumpur has apologised for sparking the controversy.

Ng Kian Nam, a lawyer, said that he had confused the dawn ceramah (lecture) and the azan in his complaint about the loudspeaker volume to the Prime Minister's Department.

"I have to admit that everyone has weaknesses including myself. As a non-Muslim, when I wrote the letter I was totally ignorant about the difference between azan dan ceramah.

"So I want to offer my sincere apology if my confusion has caused misunderstanding or hurt the feelings of any party, especially Muslims in Malaysia," he said.

His letter led to a raucous protest by several Muslim groups led by Majlis Ayahanda Wilayah Persekutuan last Friday.

The groups claimed that Ng was insulting Islam and threatened to physically harm him.

**Nong Chik: Non-issue**

Ng's apology was made during a press conference organised by Federal Territories Minister Raja Nong Chik Raja Zainal. The event was held at the office of the Lembah Pantai Umno division, which is led by Raja Nong Chik.

After Ng's read his short prepared statement, Umno and NGO members present gave Ng a round of applause.

Earlier, Raja Nong Chik met Ng and representatives of the groups involved in the protest.

Raja Nong Chik urged the public to accept the apology, stressing that the matter was a misunderstanding.

"To me, (the issue) has been resolved. I have met representatives from the groups who had voiced displeasure.

"During the meeting, the misunderstanding has been resolved. I feel that they understand. This is a non-issue. The whole thing is a non-issue," he said.

**'No need to move out'**

Raja Nong Chik also tried to assure Ng that his safety was not compromised because of the issue and urged him not to move out of the area.

"There is no issue. All non-Muslims who want to continue staying here should continue," he said.

He adds that the issue should not be blown out of proportions and that Ng was merely giving "some opinion" about the azan.

He blame "irresponsible parties" for trying to sensationalise the issue, striking fear among the residents in the area.

In Ng's letter to the prime minister, he said that the azan originating from the mosque was too loud and suggested scientific methods be employed to standardise the volume at mosques nationwide.

Following this, the mosque authorities claimed that they received an order from the Federal Territory Islamic Department to lower the volume of the loudspeakers.

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