

'Muftis must take a united stand on lewd slander'

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A coalition of Islamic NGO has urged all state muftis to immediately take a stand and drastic action on the widespread obscene slander that has ballooned in the political arena.

The group, known as Sekretariat Anti Fitnah (SAF - Anti-Defamation Secretariat) consists of 16 NGOs and include the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement (Abim) and the Ulama Association of Malaysia (PUM).

SAF coordinator Mohd Azmi Abdul Hamid claimed the current situation where there is widespread slander involving several prominent people would only result in confusion among the Muslim community.

A week ago, the nation was shaken by a sex video that was screened to selected media by businessman Shazryl Eskay Abdullah, former Malacca chief minister Rahim Thamby Chik and Perkasa treasurer Shuib Lazim, in which a man resembling an opposition leader was seen having sex with a foreign female, believed to be of Chinese nationality, in a hotel spa in Kuala Lumpur on Feb 21.

Fingers had then been pointed at PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim as the man in the video. However, Anwar has refuted the allegations.

In a statement today, Azmi said if the muftis were to take a firm stand on this matter, it would indicate to the people that they should not be easily manipulated by prominent parties who do not seem to conform to Islamic teachings when it comes to slander.

He also asked the authorities to monitor closely all print and electronic media in order to eliminate any form of insults towards the Muslim community.

"It appears to be that the widespread dissemination of obscene material is left untouched by certain authorities.

"We are distraught that this issue has led to the exploitation and maximum use of mainstream media to create a bad impression on their political opponents," Azmi said.

"Therefore, we ask for the muftis to remind the nation, including politicians, that there is a larger agenda for the people to take note off, such as the issues of development in science, education, social problems, poverty, and challenges from the enemies of Islam, as opposed to bringing slanderous shame to others," he added.

'Avoid norm of obscenity'

In another development, Solidariti Mahasiswa Malaysia (SMM) welcomed scholar Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin's statement urging a massive protest against lewd politics.

SMM chairperson Ahmad Syukri Ab Razab in a statement today also expressed concern and fear that the obscene slander in the political arena would turn into a norm in the near future.

"Will this situation turn into an acceptable norm by future generations to exploit one another through obscene slander?" he asked, adding that SMM also wanted both Eskay and Rahim to be brought to justice immediately.

"This will be a crucial message to the younger generation that such dirty tactics in politics are unhealthy for our democratic nation."

In a statement yesterday, Asri, the former mufti of Perlis, had said that all quarters should object to the culture of character assassination in politics, and for the sake of human dignity and civilisation, demand a stop to it.

Asri said such practices were dirty and disgusting and everyone, regardless of whether it was Umno, PKR, PAS, DAP or any other party, must end such tactics immediately.

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