

Mufti demands PM's Office explains terrorism charge
Malaysiakini.com
July 27, 2011

Perlis mufti Juanda Jaya wants the Prime Minister's Office to explain statements linking Perlis state government institutions with terrorism, labelling them as "wild claims".

"Any delay in their response will only invite doubts and suspicions against those who have been unjustly accused," he told Malaysiakini.

Juanda (left) pointed out that ensuring justice for the rakyat was the very basis of any government administration.

Thus, it was not wise for a government to deal unjustly and unfairly with the rakyat, especially religious leaders who administer to the spiritual and worldly needs of the people.

"I am offering to open a dialogue with the PM's Office and the National Security Council (NSC) about these accusations," Juanda said.

He said the entire line-up of Perlis Islamic scholars and the state Fatwa Council were ready to meet up with Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and the minister in charge of religious affairs in the Prime Minister's Department, Jamil Khir Baharom.

They were ready to explain their stand and hear more on the accusations that have been levelled against them.

'Wahabi links and potential terrorists'

Juanda called on the government to give priority to resolving this issue as it touched on Islam.

Two days ago, the NSC, which is under the Prime Minister's Office, held a briefing for state muftis and representatives of state religious bodies.

NSC representatives disclosed at the briefing that certain Islamic leaders and scholars have been deemed security threats as they had links with Wahabism and had the potential to become terrorists.

Among those accused by the NSC, which also said that they had the backing of Arab nations such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain, are former Perlis mufti Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin and, incredulously, several young ulama from Umno.

Juanda and representatives of the Perlis religious body were reportedly excluded from the briefing and were also named as those being on the council's possible terrorist "watch list".

Meanwhile, in his response on the matter, PAS youth chief Nasruddin Hassan conveyed his sympathies to the young ulama from Umno who have been lumped together with those the NSC deems to be potential terrorists.

'Umno ulama in government sight'

"Out of nowhere, after working hard to defend the government and vilify the Bersih 2.0 rally for electoral reforms, they are now suddenly labelled as Wahabis and terrorists," Nasruddin said in a posting on his blog.

He likened their fates to those who fell down a ladder that they were trying to climb, only to have the ladder as well falling on them.

Nasruddin (left) said that knowing some of Umno ulama personally, his mind could not compute that, going by their faces and character, they could be terrorists.

But therein, he posited, was the rub. The government's senses were being clouded by its war against the Wahabi, which it linked with terrorism, and this has ironically put the Umno ulama in their sights.

"Just as the Umno ulama vilified Bersih 2.0 (at the government's behest), similarly, the government now brooks no remorse in labelling its own ulama as terrorists," he noted.

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