

Perak mufti: Malays split because gov't is corrupt
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Perak Mufti Harussani Zakaria had once advised Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak that it is the government's "weaknesses" and "corrupt" practices that have divided the Malay community, he revealed today.

"I told Najib, 'Datuk Seri, the Malays are split because this government is very weak, betrays trust (tidak amanah) and is corrupt,' Harussani (right) said.

Speaking at a forum in Shah Alam on the role of religious scholars, he said he has given non-partisan advice to the nation's leaders since the time second premier Abdul Razak Hussein was in office.

However, when asked to elaborate on his advice to Najib, the outspoken mufti, who rarely openly criticises the government, refused.

According to Harussani, he had even tried to advise fourth premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his successor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on various issues.

The mufti said that Mahathir was usually accepting of his advice, except in three instances, including the sacking of his deputy and now opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim.

"I went to see him when he was about to sack Anwar, but I couldn't get in to see him. I had told Mahathir that Anwar is not someone with little influence and sacking him would split the Malay community... charging him with sodomy without four witnesses would have dire consequences.

"(The second advice) was that if he insists on sacking (Anwar), reshuffle the cabinet first. Demote Anwar first (before sacking him)... I cannot remember the other (advice)," he said.

The country's most senior mufti also shared that Abdullah had rejected him in all three instances that he had tried to advise the then premier, but declined to elaborate further.

'Non-Muslims are cruel'

Reiterating his stand on Malay unity, Harussani said that Malay-Muslims should come together through a PAS-Umno unity government as Islam calls for Muslims to love one another and not make their beds with non-Muslims.

"The Quran states that non-Muslims are cruel. It never states that Muslims are cruel," he said, referring to cooperation between Malay-based political parties and parties led by non-Muslims.

PAS information chief and fellow panellist Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man's (left) response to Harussani's serious remark, however, invited laughter from the 500-odd people attending the two hour forum.

Jokingly, the Pahang PAS commissioner said: "If even a mufti is not allowed to see the prime minister... well you make your own conclusions."

He added that the government and Umno had for many years treated religious scholars like "clogs" (terompah kayu) and "rice cookers".

"This is to say that religious scholars are only considered when they are useful. The Fatwa Council's views are rejected, muftis' views are set aside, so how is it that religious scholars are expected to direct politics when their role is not acknowledged?" he said.

Meanwhile, fellow panellist and part of the Umno young ulama group Fathul Bari Mat Jahya said that the

act of dakwah, or inviting others to do good, takes time to bear results.

As such, the scholar, who expressed dismay at being labelled a “hired ulama”, implored Muslims to pray for the wellbeing of leaders so that the rest of society can benefit from this.

“But no, people pray that leaders die (mampus) or that their stomachs burst,” he said, referring to a statement by PAS spiritual leader Nik Aziz Nik Mat.

Moderating the forum was former Perlis mufti Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin.

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