

Anti-apostasy rally group pumped by sultan's decree
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A group of Muslim NGOs, which have coalesced under the banner of 'Himpun' for a planned anti-apostasy rally, said today it was encouraged by the Selangor sultan's recent statement.

"The statement by the palace has made us, the leaders of Muslim NGOs and our members, more confident in our effort to defend and save the faith of Muslims in this country," Himpun secretary Aminuddin Yahaya said in a statement released today.

The coalition is planning an anti-apostasy rally dubbed 'Himpunan Sejuta Umat Selamatkan Akidah' (Gathering of a million to save the faith).

"We are confident that hundreds of thousands of people will flood the stadium to express opposition against any threats against their faith and it will reflect the solidarity and consolidation of Muslims without considering descent, socio-economic status or political ideology," said Aminuddin.

In a statement on Monday, the Selangor sultan had justified the raid by the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais) on an event at a Damansara Utama Methodist Church hall.

However, he said no action would be taken against any party, despite indications of attempted proselytising of Muslims.

The sultan also expressed displeasure over such attempts and called on the state Islamic authorities to ensure that there would be no such recurrence.

"The Selangor palace and its people can trust us to bear the heavy responsibility of ensuring that the sultan's wishes and commitment of not wanting the faith of Muslims to be compromised will be upheld," said Aminuddin.

NONEIt is unclear who leads the coalition but Senator Mohd Ezam Nor (left) has been a fierce critic when the Jais raid controversy first broke out and had even sniped at non-Muslim exco members in the Selangor government.

In a recent posting on micro-blogging site Twitter, Ezam announced that he would be conducting a roadshow against apostasy.

"Starting this week, I with (Kulim Bandar Baru MP) Zulkifli Nordin (will conduct) roadshows against the apostasy agenda. (We) also stand with NGOs and parties in the gathering of a million people," he wrote.

According to the Himpun rally's Facebook page, this appears to be a direct reaction to religious controversies over the past years, with the most recent being the Jais raid.

"Recently, the Christianisation movement and some non-Muslims groups have dared to threaten the faith of Muslims. They have dared to make demands on issues such as apostasy, Malay-language Bible, the use of the word Allah and Jais..." its description reads.

The rally is expected to take place on Oct 22 at the Shah Alam Stadium.