

PAS to declare stand on anti-apostasy rally tonight
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Pakatan Rakyat will be making its stand on the anti-apostasy rally scheduled for this Saturday only after coalition partner PAS deliberates on the matter tonight.

PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim said once PAS has been further informed on the backers of the rally for Muslims in Shah Alam, the coalition can make a better decision.

NONE "We are still gathering the relevant information on who is involved and who is backing it, and whether it is true that it is to defend the faith.

"The people (we suspect are behind this) have not responded to Muslims having ownership in the alcohol industry, or even made their stand on whether gambling is legitimate," said Anwar.

He told reporters at the Opposition Leader's office in Parliament this evening that Pakatan would let PAS decide on its participation in the event, since it is privy to the matter.

Also present at the meeting today were DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang (Ipoh Timur) and PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang (Marang).

Anwar added that they suspect that the rally, dubbed 'Save the Faith of the Umat', is being backed by political opponent, Umno.

According to the movement's website, the main objective of the event is to "gauge the unity among Muslims, particularly against the Christianisation efforts on Aug 3".

This is a reference to a search by the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais), conducted at a hall in the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) compound, where a fund-raising dinner was being held, following a tip-off that proselytising efforts were being carried out by a welfare group.

'In defending Islam, we cannot do wrong to others'

Non-governmental organisation Harapan Komuniti was at that time using the premises to hold a thanksgiving dinner, which was gatecrashed by the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais).

A probe conducted by Jais later revealed that the event was attended by 12 Muslims and the department allegedly found evidence of attempts to subvert Muslims.

The website lists 25 NGOs that have pledged support for the gathering, but media reports say it will be attended by 1,000 Muslim NGOs.

"PAS will decide at the meeting tonight... (usually) in the election season the Umno media will politicise such issues (so) we must know for real if the rally is to strengthen faith and to defend Muslims," said Abdul Hadi.

"Umno has been ruling for 50 years so (if) they (are the ones behind it they) should have done it long ago.

"We don't treat issues like this only during the election season. Indeed we must defend our faith, but in defending our faith we cannot do wrong to others," added Hadi.

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