

## **PAS Youth: LGBT lifestyle contravenes human rights**

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While supporters of banned festival Seksualiti Merdeka cry abuse of human rights, PAS Youth is holding up the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 to show they are wrong.

In a press statement issued yesterday, the Youth wing's legal and human rights director Ahmad Zamri As'ad Khuzaimi said Article 16 of the UDHR is clear about this.

"Article 16 of the UDHR clearly states that it is the fundamental right of an individual to come into a marriage, between a man and a woman, and not between the same sex," Ahmad Zamri said.

The article states that "men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationalist or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family".

NONEIt also states that "the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and state".

The UDHR, which was ratified in 1948 does not make any reference to sexual orientation.

"So on what basis do these NGOs who stand by Seksualiti Merdeka defend their deviant cause?

"This campaign is not based on the true principles of human rights... but only emerged several years ago," Ahmad Zamri said.

He said PAS Youth also rejected the Jogjakarta Principle 2006, which outlines the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.

The principle, which was formulated by 29 international human rights experts, is "academic in nature and non-binding" on United Nations members.

"In fact, 57 countries opposed the resolution (Jogkakarta Principle) , including Malaysia," Ahmad Zamri said.

'Human rights based on religion'

Citing the works of human rights researcher Michael J Perry and Jerome H Shestack, he argued that the lifestyle of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders "contravenes the principles of human rights" as such principles have their fundamentals in religion.

NONE"The ideas spread by Seksualiti Merdeka are secular and not based on true human rights.

" (The festival ) has smeared the human rights campaign as a whole and tainted the Rukunegara, the first principle of which is belief in God," he said, adding that no religion supports homosexuality.

In this, the Youth wing of Islamic party PAS has joined the ranks of Muslim organisations in taking a strong stance against the banned festival.

"The irony is, the NGOs that support Seksualiti Merdeka are also hardcore supporters of the UDHR," Ahmad Zamri noted.

The campaign, he said, was also not supported in the Federal Constitution, including Section 11 which, among others, protects equality and the freedom of religion, assembly, speech, association, movement.

Seksualiti Merdeka is an annual festival celebrating the human rights of people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and is backed by several NGOs, including the Bar Council, Suaram and Amnesty International.

The NGOs have argued that the organisers should be allowed to proceed based on the freedom provided under the federal constitution.

Selangor PAS, on grounds of compassion, said the "confused" lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders must be assisted and not derided as theirs is a "natural" problem and not something borne out of "wrong choices".

It also asked for guidance from the National Fatwa Council on the matter.

The festival was banned earlier this week, after a nationwide outcry from different groups.