

Mukhriz: Vice dens booming under Kedah PAS
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Massage parlours and karaoke joints are mushrooming in Kedah since PAS formed the state government, said Jerlun MP Mukhriz Mahathir.

In an interview with *Mingguan Malaysia*, Mukhriz said the number of vice-dens have quadrupled in the four years that PAS had been in power.

He said this was strange, considering that PAS touts itself as an Islamic party.

"If it was DAP that was ruling (the state), maybe this can be comprehensible but this cannot be accepted when it is PAS that is ruling the state," he said.

Mukhriz said that when queried about the increase in number of vice-dens in the state, the state government replied that this was to "respect non-Muslims".

"But has non-Muslims (in Kedah) increased four-folds? I don't see their numbers increasing," said Mukhriz.

Azizan's U-turn

Mukhriz claims that it was Umno that had queried PAS on this during the month of ramadhan last year, resulting in the state government announcing a one-month ban on such outlets.

"But two or three days later, he retracted the ban on grounds that he was respecting non-Muslims," said Mukhriz.

In July last year, Menteri Besar Azizan Abdul Razak announced that 13 type of entertainment outlets such as karaoke centres, discotheques and live band performances at eateries.

Azizan had justified the ban, explaining that his administration was merely enforcing a rule set by his predecessor, in form of the Entertainment and Entertainment Outlets Enactment 1997.

After some protest from industry players and Pakatan Rakyat partners, the Kedah government agreed to a compromise - that affected business enture that Muslims do not patronise their outlets and that they must close from Thursday evenings at 6pm until 2.30pm the next day.

Sabotage

Asked on the possibility that sabotage may play a factor in Umno's chances of wresting the state from PAS in the upcoming general election, Mukhriz said that the matter needs to be addressed.

"After experiencing a lost (for a whole state legislative assembly) term, it is certain that the question of sabotage and jealousy needs to be resolved.

"In this matter, we must be like Terengganu but not like Kelantan," he said.

Although Mukhriz did not elaborate on his use of Terengganu and Kelantan as an example, it was likely that he was referring to Terengganu Umno's ability to close ranks and wrest back the state from PAS back in 2004.

In contrast, a deeply factionalised Kelantan Umno has been unable to main significant gains in the state

since 1990 when PAS took over, except in 2004 when it was two seats short of forming the state government.

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