

Groups want sultan to step in over new mosque panels

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By Koh Jun Lin

Two NGOs have urged the Selangor sultan to intervene, sack all new mosque committees, and pave the way for fresh elections, in order to curb alleged political interference in the selection of the committees.

Selangor Perkasa and Gagasan Anti-Penyelewengan Selangor (Gaps) have submitted a memorandum at the sultan's palace at Bukit Kayangan, Shah Alam this afternoon to ask Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah to direct the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais) to do so.

They want a re-election of all mosque committees in six months, and in the interim the mandate of the previous mosque committees is to be extended.

In addition, they want the chairperson of the Selangor Islamic Affairs Council (Mais) to chair a committee to oversee the election process.

They also want the sultan to ask Jais to ensure that mosque activities such as religious classes would not be used as a political platform.

"Of late, we have heard many (23) complaints about political intervention in the selection of mosque committees. It was done without transparency and was undemocratic," said Gaps president Hamidzun Khairuddin, who led the press conference outside the palace after submitting the memorandum.

Also present were representatives from the Sunway and Batu Tiga mosque committees.

The memorandum was received by the sultan's private secretary, Mohamad Munir Bani.

"He is taking the matter seriously and wants Gaps and Perkasa to give details of mosques that are facing problems in the selection of the mosque committees (for the 2012 to 2015 term)," he said, while asking the public to contact Gaps if they have any information.

In the four-page memorandum, the NGOs said they had received complaints that the committee member's list issued by Jais was different from what was already decided by vote, and included names of candidates who were defeated or disqualified.