

Belly dancing flap shows PAS' 'backwardness'

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Segamat PAS' reaction against a belly dancing event at a supermarket there showed that it would implement "ultra-conservative" and "backward" theocratic policies in Johor had Pakatan Rakyat won the state in the 13th general election.

NONEIn a statement today, Segamat MCA chief Dr Lee Hong Tee (left in photo) said that the censure by Segamat PAS chief Firdaus Masod also proved that PAS is an "authoritarian" when it comes to others' values.

"Belly dancing is a healthy activity and theatrical performance. Since PAS considers belly dancing as having gone against what they deem as Malaysian norms, this shows PAS simply cannot tolerate any form of healthy artistic performances," he said.

He said that had Pakatan taken over Johor, and placed a PAS leader as its menteri besar, such "anti-commercial" policies would have turned "economically-successful Johor into the next Kelantan".

PAS' Firdaus was reported by the party's news portal Harakahdaily as saying that the "semi-naked desert dance" performance was insensitive to local culture, especially as it was viewed by the supermarket's underaged patrons.

He reportedly said that the midriff baring sparkly outfits had annoyed business owners in the mall and customers who could not communicate with each other because of the loud music.

He was also quoted by Malay-language daily Sinar Harian as saying that the performance had "maligned Islam".

The then PAS-led Kedah government had, during its rule, placed strict guidelines on entertainment including banning women from performing in stage shows.

However, the ban was later withdrawn following public pressure.

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