

Cabinet's interfaith panel has failed, says PAS Youth
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Putrajaya's Promotion of Interfaith Understanding and Harmony committee, established on Feb 24, 2010, has failed in its objectives to instil peace and social stability, said PAS Youth.

In a press release today, PAS Youth deputy chief Dr Raja Ahmad Iskandar said evidence of its failure can be seen in the recent spate of religious controversies, the latest being the use of a surau by Buddhist adherents in Johor.

"For PAS Youth, the committee should have started working actively and aggressively three years ago to know the people and adherents of every religion and encourage them to respect the values, practices and way of life of each religious groups.

"What happened in Johor shows that there are still people who are confused about freedom of religion," he said.

Raja Ahmad said there has also been a rise in instances of people stoking hatred against Islam and instances of certain NGOs fanning the flames of certain issues which resulted in "prejudice" against Islam.

"We urge the committee to swiftly to educate the public to ensure that interfaith harmony is forged. The federal government should approach this seriously before there is more religious tension and racial conflicts," he said.

Foreigners are unaware

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Buddhist Consultative Council (MBCC) has urged foreigners to be more mindful of the locals' sensitivity in Malaysia when performing their religious obligations in the country.

In referring to a YouTube video clip of Singaporean Buddhists meditating in a surau in Kota Tinggi, Johor, the council said that it happened due to a lack of understanding among adherents of different religions.

"The resort owner and the Singaporeans involved in may not be aware that their actions may hurt the sensitivity of some Malaysian Muslims and may cause disharmony amongst the multiracial and multireligious communities," it said in a

press release.

"(We) urge everyone to view the incident in perspective and to resolve the issues in an amicable way."

MBCB also mooted for amendments to the education system to properly introduce different major religions to all students and for the government to initiate interfaith dialogues.

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