PAS wants action against controversial scholar
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PAS information chief Mahfuz Omar wants the government to take action against Umno member Dr Kassim Ahmad for "insulting Islam" during an event in Putrajaya yesterday.

The Pokok Sena MP said that no action had ever been taken on Kassim even though his "anti-hadith" teachings had been declared as "haram" by Islamic authorities in the country.

"He (Kassim) questioned how the Muslims are idolising Prophet Muhammad, about how women's hair is not a part of the body that needs to be covered (aurat), and that there exists a priest caste. This is an insult to Islam and is also an insult to the royalty," Mahfuz said during a press conference today.

Yesterday, Kassim, a controversial religious scholar, also criticisedMuslims for looking upon religious leaders as "gods".

He also asked Malaysians and political parties in the country to return to the "real Islam" in a seminar called “Pemikiran Kassim Ahmad: Satu Penilaian”.

Mahfuz (right) said that he considered Kassim as an "Umno religious scholar" because the latter was among the reference persons for Umno in religious matters.

"I am surprised that no Umno member has said anything or has taken any action.

"It is unfortunate for us that Umno is allowing teachings that can cause confusion among the people," he added.

'A debate will see who is confused'

Kassim, meanwhile said today, that he wanted to "debate" with his critics.

"We will see in the debate, who is confused and who is not," he told Malaysiakini.

Two NGOs, the right-wing Perkasa and the Sunnah Waljamaah Malaysia Members Association (Aswaja), had both criticised Kassim's comments and asked for action to be taken against him as well.

Aswaja president Zamihan Mat Zin said that Kassim was interpreting the al-Quran with his "shallow mind".

"He is urged to repent and immediately apologise to all Muslims in the country," Zamihan had said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali (left) said that the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) ought to act on Kassim's comments immediately.

"Action must be taken because this insults Islam and also insults Allah," he said.

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