

PAS rep: Amend law that lets Mais control Jais
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A PAS assemblyperson has urged the government to amend a 2003 enactment so that the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais) will take instructions from the state executive council and not from the Selangor Islamic Affairs Council (Mais).

Hulu Kelang assemblyperson Saari Sungib (right) said that Jais should be just like any other department in Selangor which receives instructions from the state government and not from other entities.

“According to the enactment, Jais director is automatically appointed as the secretary of Mais.

“Legally speaking, I understand that all departments should by right be under the state government. Therefore I stand by my view that Jais should be under the state as well,” he told Malaysiakini.

He was referring to an amendment to the Islamic Administration (Selangor) Enactment done in 2003.

Section 16 of the enactment states that the director of Jais must be the Mais secretary.

The enactment also states that the Mais secretary must act on instructions of the Mais chairperson, as per subsections 16(2) and 16(3).

The sub-sections state that the Mais secretary is the chief executive officer and administrator of the council and must be responsible to implement Mais policies.

Yesterday, four PAS parliamentarians urged the state government to amend the law, so as to remove any executive powers from Mais, to ensure Jais does not take instructions from the council.

The MPs said that Mais is an institution which is seen to be close to the sultan and giving it executive powers will sully the royal institution.

Mais 'no right' to override the AG

Meanwhile, in a statement today, PKR's Ampang MP Zuraida Kamaruddin (left) said that Mais' decision not to return copies of the Bible seized during a Jais raid in January showed “utter disrespect for the country's laws”.

She was referring to a statement by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak who urged Mais discuss the matter with the attorney-general (AG) and said that the solution to the Bible row should be reached based on provisions and spirit of the country's constitution and law.

AG Abdul Gani Patail had last week stated that the case is closed and left it to Jais to take action in accordance to the law in regards to returning the holy books.

"Mais has no right to override the AG's orders and it is duty-bound to follow those directions which are in accordance to the constitution," Zuraida said.

"Mais' sole decision to retain the bible shows utter disrespect for the country's laws. Considering the difficult position Jais is in, Jais should consider detaching itself from the main body so that they can just follow the Selangor state's orders."

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