

MCA slams Kelantan's 'female spectators only' ruling
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Kelantan's move to ban male spectators from a state-organised netball tournament next month has courted MCA's ire.

Kelantan MCA economic consultative committee chairman Lua Choon Hann said that the female-only affair is "step backwards" and "destroys the sport".

Lua said the ruling for the netball tournament also defeats the purpose of the tournament, which is to revive the sport in Kelantan and to raise netball spectatorship.

"While we note PAS' intention to strengthen its Islamic City, the government in so-doing must also take into account the feelings of non-Muslims, the nature of the sports and whether such instructions will bring about an irreparable damage," he said in a statement.

"The ban will surely affect the viewership and curtail the sports' popularity. Worse, Malaysia would be turned into a laughing stock."

He also lamented that this is yet another case of "unbearable restrictions on individual, especially non-Muslim's freedom".

The New Straits Times yesterday reported that the Kelantan government will organise a netball tournament which will only allow female spectators, at the state's 14 parliamentary constituencies.

All players, including non-Muslims have to wear long-sleeved T-shirts and loose-fitting track pants, while the matches will take place indoors.

"This is an application of sporting needs based on true compliance with syariah, prayer times and the covering of aurat (parts of the body which should not be exposed in public under Islamic teachings)," state executive councillor Ramli Mamat reportedly said.

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