

**Penang transgender committee un-Islamic, says Perkasa
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The Penang government is “insensitive” to set up a transgender committee last Tuesday, said Malay rights group Perkasa.

Its Islamic affairs bureau chief, Amini Amir Abdullah, said transgender individuals need not get special rights, and should be treated as per the gender they are assigned at birth.

“Perkasa feels there is no need for special treatment, be it in hospitals, prison, or to set up separate toilets, as they (individuals identifying as transwomen) are clearly men.

“Perkasa is also disappointed with the the Penang DAP government for trampling on Muslim sensitivities on an issue which has to do with whether something is haram (forbidden in Islam) or halal (permissible in Islam),” he said.

He said scholars agree it is wrong to change Allah’s creation, and it is “forbidden” and “a big sin” for someone to present them as the opposite gender.

“I urge the Penang government to disband the committee and to consider Muslim sensitivities. There are many other communities who deserve attention and assistance,” he said.

He also claimed that the Prophet Muhammad had said men who portray themselves as women are scorned.

However, the hadith commonly cited to support this has been disputed by scholars as a weak hadith, or a hadith whose veracity is in dispute.

In the disputed hadith, the prophet reportedly banished to different district a man who had henna on his hands – a practice then only allowed of women. Asked why he did not kill the man, the prophet said he is not allowed to kill someone who prays.

In another hadith, the prophet told his wives to put on a veil when in company of a transgender person.

The term used in the hadith is 'mukhannathun', which means 'effeminate ones' or 'men who resemble women'.

Scholars in Iran and Egypt have also issued fatwa to allow sex reassignment surgeries for individuals who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, while the third gender is recognised in Pakistan.

The committee in Penang, temporarily headed by assemblyperson Teh Yee Cheu, will look at transgender rights and welfare.

It will look at access to healthcare, treatment of transgender inmates and possibility of special toilets for transgender individuals.

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