

**Nik Aziz: Apostasy akin to army deserters**  
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PAS spiritual advisor Nik Aziz Nik Mat likened those who have renounced Islam to army deserters because religion, like other institutions, is bound by rules.

"It's like joining the army. You can choose to join. But if you wear a uniform, start training only to desert later, you'll be caught by the military police," he told a press conference in Kota Baru last night.

He said this after he was asked to comment on the Federal Court decision to reject Lina Joy's appeal to overturn the National Registration Department's decision not to remove the word 'Islam' from her identity card.

Lina, 43, had claimed to have renounced Islam to embrace Christianity 17 years ago. After a seven-year court battle, she eventually lost her appeal in the nation's highest court in a 2-1 decision.

However, Nik Aziz admitted twice during the press conference that he was not sure of the entire facts of the case.

"I don't know about Lina Joy. But apparently she has yet to embrace Islam," added Nik Aziz who is also Kelantan menteri besar.

On the lobbying by NGOs for the PAS Government in Kelantan to table the Freedom of Information bill, Nik Aziz said not all state secrets should be revealed.

"Taking care of a government is like taking care of your family - some things are secrets, some are not," he said.

### **God's project**

In February, PAS vice-president Husam Musa said the party might table the bill during the June sitting of the Kelantan state legislative assembly.

He added that his legal team was pouring through a proposal on the bill prepared by the National Coalition for a Freedom of Information Act, comprising of 34 NGOs.

The coalition is pushing for Kelantan to be the first state in the country to have a Freedom of Information Act.

To another question, Nik Aziz shot down suggestions that Kelantan hold local government elections because it is not financially feasible.

"I disagree (with the idea)... such elections cost a lot. For me, there is no need to hold such elections," he added.

Nik Aziz was also quizzed on his claims at a recent sermon that he was approached by several individuals urging him to join Barisan Nasional.

"I told him, if you want Umno and PAS to be united, Umno must change their policy to Islam. Problem solved. PAS won't have to exist".

He also criticised Umno for promoting Islam Hadhari to bring back religion into mainstream party politics only after 58 years after the party was formed.

"Akhirat (judgement day) is not a government project nor by some companies. It is the project of Allah. How can they face judgement day with Islam Hadhari? Islam has a holy scripture. Umno doesn't use the Koran. They use nationalist (sentiments)," he added.

The press conference was held after a dinner organised by the Menteri Besar's office for media personnel covering the ongoing PAS Muktamar (convention) in Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan.

The three-day event ends tomorrow.

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