

'Insane to say CM's name used in Friday sermon'
Malaysiakini.com
August 20, 2010

The Penang state government has strongly denied that Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng's name has replaced the King's name in the Friday sermon at several mosques in the state.

State exco in charge of religious affairs Abdul Malik Abul Kassim (left) said initial investigations showed no such incident had occurred as the text of the sermon, which is prepared by the state religious affairs department, never used Lim's name.

Abdul Malik, who is Batu Maung state assemblyperson, said whoever did such a thing was 'insane' (tidak waras) as no right thinking person would do it.

He said regulations of the state religious department were clear in that the mosque administration had to get the approval of the department if it wanted to invite any religious leader (khatib or imam) to lead the sermon or prayers.

Yesterday, Penang Umno chairperson Ahmad Zahid Hamidi claimed that the name-switch had occurred last week at several mosques in Tasek Gelugor, Permatang Pauh and Jelutong.

But no police report made

This would constitute an insult to the Conference of Rulers, Ahmad Zahid (below) said after chairing an Umno meeting in Kepala Batas, reported Bernama.

ahmad zahid hamidiHowever, he added, no police report had been made on the matter.

Abdul Malik said certain quarters were trying to sabotage Penang by cooking up this issue, after failing to play up narrow racial sentiments to make the state appear as if it was oppressing the Malay Muslim community.

He criticised Ahmad Zahid, who is also defence minister, and Umno for trying to politicise religion and said the former should have contacted Lim, himself or the state religious department if he had heard such wild rumours.

Religion was a serious matter and should be non-partisan. All parties must stop inciting religious tension, especially during Ramadan.

"This desperate action is meant to create a rift between Pakatan Rakyat leaders and the palace and to stir up the anger of the Malays, just like what happened in Johor with the banner issue bearing the sultan's picture," he said.

Mosque committee members involved?

"After two years of administering Penang, the state has proven that Islamic development has been given priority," Abdul Malik said, adding that he does not rule out that certain mosque committee members were using the issue to sabotage the state.

"Our investigation revealed a list of committee members in some mosques who could possibly be linked to the sabotage," he said.

YESTERDAY, Ahmad Zahid also questioned the presence of the chief minister at the

distribution of tithes, saying only a Muslim leader could hand them out.

Abdul Malik said Lim never did so, but accompanied PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim to several functions at which Anwar presented contributions for the communities to run religious programmes.

He added that since Pakatan took over the state, allocations for Islamic affairs and administration has been increased by 100 percent, from RM12.5 to RM24.3 million.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/140632>