

Sermon controversy: BN did it too in Hulu Selangor
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The Penang state government is out to prove that Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng is not the only non-Muslim who has had the privilege of prayers being conducted for his well-being in mosques.

NONE

Deputy Chief Minister I Mansor Othman (left) and state Islamic Religious Affairs Committee chairperson Abdul Malik Abul Kassim (right) today produced a photo to show that during the Hulu Selangor by-election, prayers had been conducted for the BN candidate from MIC P Kamalanathan.

Kamalanathan won the by-election defeating PKR's Zaid Ibrahim. The photo, which depicted a banner bearing the portrait of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Kamalanathan, carried an invitation to a 'Majlis Bacaan Yassin and Solat Hajat untuk Calon Barisan Nasional Pilihanraya Kecil Hulu Selangor'.

The photo is being used to counter the recent controversy surrounding Lim's name being used in Friday sermons to replace that of the Agong.

Abdul Malik, who is Batu Maung state assemblyperson, criticised Umno for practising 'double standard's when causing a brouhaha over Lim, while the party had resorted to similar methods in Selangor not too long ago.

Abdul Malik criticised Umno's 'hypocrisy' in making the recent allegations against Lim while targeting the khatibs/imams who conducted the prayers in the mosques.

NONE "The purpose of showing this photo is to show the true nature of BN, and how they have used such prayers for their own political purposes," he said.

""If you say we cannot bless the head of the state, what is more serious then are the yassin and doa hajat prayers," he added.

Many Muslims upset

Recently, Penang Umno liaison chief Ahmad Zahid Hamidi revealed that in reciting the doa during Friday sermons at some mosques in the state, the King's name had been replaced with Lim's name, incurring the ire of many Muslims.

Police reports were lodged against preacher Zakaria Ahmad, who is alleged to be involved in the controversy.

Zakaria then reportedly admitted having omitted the name of Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin in the "doa khutbah Jumaat", reasoning that he was praying for the well-being of all the country's leaders including the King.

The police have taken a statement from Zakaria, who had also attended a meeting with the state religious affairs department at 2.30pm today.

It is learnt that the department was satisfied with Zakaria's explanation.

Meanwhile, Abdul Malik said the state government regretted that the controversy had involved the palace and the Agong.
He reiterated that UMNO's allegations were slanderous.

He urged the police to complete their investigation over the Friday prayers controversy soon so that the truth about the matter could surface and necessary action could be taken against the culprit.

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