

Scholars: Islam doesn't bar non-Muslims from mosques
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Former Perlis mufti Mohd Asri Zainal Abidin today refuted media claims that he defended Serdang parliamentarian Teo Nie Ching 's presence in a surau, though he saw nothing wrong with a non-Muslim being in the house of God.

asri jais record statment colum upacara telan air ludah ustaz 100410 pc“There are media reports that I defended Teo (left), I must say that those are not entirely accurate.

"I do not interfere in politics and I don't really know what actually happened," said the religious scholar in a press statement to the media.

However he stressed that in his to knowledge nothing bars a non-Muslim to enter a Muslim house of worship.

“Non-Muslims can enter into a mosque or surau with the right intent, like to get to know Islam, understand and study it. They are also allowed to enter the houses of worships to conduct dealings with Muslims.”

He gave as an example, how in the time of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself, non-Muslims were allowed to enter the mosque to meet the Prophet.

Asri also reminded all parties that Islamic issues must be looked at with the proper religious considerations based on proper dalil (evidence) and hujjah (arguments).

He warned that using the scales of partisan politics to weigh religious issues can damage the sanctity of Islam.

“Islam is built on dalil and hujjah, while partisan politics are often built on perception and prejudices,” pointed out Asri.

'Don't politicise mosques'

The fact is, added the former mufti, not only non-Muslims but Muslims, too, are prohibited from using the house of God for partisan politics or self interest.

He reiterated that all views with regards to Islam must be based on the real teachings of the religion.

“The approach of some politicians of late, who use the Islam as an excuse to invoke inter-racial strife, can actually create misunderstandings about Islam.”

“It is these actions that truly sullies the religion,” concluded Mohd Asri.

NONELast Sunday, Teo (right) visited the Al-Huda surau as their parliamentarian, in order to hand over state government's contribution for repairs to the surau fence.

She had timed her visit in order to break fast with members of the surau's committee and congregation.

Upon hearing of the matter, the Selangor Islamic Council (Mais) suspended the Al Huda

surau committee and issued DAP's Serdang MP Teo Nie Ching a caution letter for addressing a gathering inside the prayer hall.

Following this, hell was raised by Utusan Malaysia, Mais, Malay rights NGO Perkasa and Umno politicians.

S'gor mufti answers

Teo has since said she will apologise to the Selangor sultan over the controversy as well as to the Muslim community generally for any offence she may have unintentionally caused.

However, PAS and its spiritual advisor Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat has defended the DAP parliamentarian.

Selangor mufti on surau issue 091109 letterAsri's assertions echo an earlier statement by Selangor mufti Mohd Tamyas Abdul Wahid regarding the same matter.

In a letter (left) dated Nov 9, 2009, to the Selangor Religious Affairs Department (Jais), Tamyas distinguished between the sacred Masjid al-Haram in Makkah and other mosques around the world.

"According to history, the Prophet (while he lived) in Medina did not repulse any visits by Jews or Christians who wanted to meet him even when he was in the mosque of Medina," said Tamyas in the letter addressed to Jais' chief assistant director in charge of mosques.

"They would come with a request, seeking justice (in a dispute) or for an administrative or other matter.

"It is understood from such incidents that there is no prohibition in Islam for meetings to be held within mosques other than the Masjid Al-Haram in blessed Makkah so long as they are held with good intentions," Tamyas added.

teoh beng hock memorial night 160710 kit siangIn a statement issued today, meanwhile, DAP supremo and Ipoh Timor MP Lim Kit Siang (right) expressed his "full support" to Teo for her apology.

Reacting to the intemperate language and portrayal by Teoh's detractors over the incident, Lim said Malaysians are "shocked" at the lengths certain quarters are willing to go to "to foment disaffection".

He reserved most of his criticisms, however, against Perkasa's Ibrahim for the latter's remarks yesterday comparison of the US 1960s' activist Malcolm X with Teo.

In a mobile text message to the press yesterday, Ibrahim recounted the assassination of US 1960s activist Malcolm X, who had "preached to Christians and entered churches in order to preach to non-Muslims".

Asking whether Ibrahim was suggesting that Teo killed just as Malcolm X was killed some five decades ago, Lim said: "Rational Malaysians must recoil at the intemperate language and irresponsible imagery used by the Perkasa chief."

"Why was Malcolm X's assassination raised in this context?

"The invoking of Malcolm X's assassination by Ibrahim Ali must be condemned in the strongest possible terms, as it goes against all that Malaysians want of a peaceful and harmonious plural Malaysian society and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's inclusive 1Malaysia where Malaysians accept and not just tolerate the nation's richest asset - our ethnic, cultural and religious diversity.

"The Perkasa chief's invocation of violence by citing the assassination of Malcolm X must be condemned in the strongest possible terms by all Malaysians regardless of race or religion as it has gone beyond the pale of acceptable public discourse," said Lim.

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