

**More objections to noisy, sexy 'ge tai'**  
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More Muslim associations and NGOs have today expressed their objection to the loud music from the Hungry Ghost festival and the sexy antics of its performers which they considered 'immoral'.

muslim groups pc on hungry ghost festival concert 090910 haja najmudeen kaderPenang Muslim League president Haja Najmudeen Kader (right) said such 'immoral entertainment' from girls popularly known as 'ge tai' should not be accepted by any community.

"Our non-Muslim friends have the same thinking - no religion or culture allows such immoral activities," said Haja, who also represent 14 other Muslim associations.

He called for respect and consideration towards places of worship, saying that tolerance and understanding, which is key to harmonious living, should not be pushed to its limit.

Haja said that the Jalan Kapiten Keling area, which houses various religious building, is a microcosm of cooperation, understanding and muhibbah (unity) among the different communities in Penang.

He added that it was understandable for a community to feel upset when their worship or prayer sessions were interrupted by others.

"There exist here a boundary for understanding and tolerance but it should not be pushed by certain groups at other people's expense," he added, urging the authorities not to take the matter lightly.

bukit gantang 050409 taman kaya ge tai stageThe Jalan Kapiten Keling area falls within the Tanjung constituency and its member of parliament Chow Kon Yeow is not available for comment despite repeated calls and text messages.

Yesterday, the Mosque Goodwill Committee in Georgetown appealed to the Agong to direct the relevant state and federal authorities to stop the 'abuse' of the festival by 'certain irresponsible and insensitive groups'.

A number of stages have been built for the celebration, which ended Wednesday, less than 50 meters from two historic mosques - Masjid Kapitan Keling and Masjid Melayu Lebuah Aceh.

Over the past few weeks, there have been performances in which young and scantily clad girls sing Chinese, English, Malay and Hindi pop songs accompanied by loud, ear-piercing music as part of the month-long Hungry Ghost Festival.

More stringent guidelines required

Meanwhile, Tanjung Malay Association president Fadzil Shuib called for clearer guidelines and more stringent requirements for obtaining permits for such festivals, which he said "disturbs the peace and harmony of the neighbourhood".

"The responsible sectors, such as the police and the state government, must have proper enforcement so that goodwill between the different communities can be preserved," he said.

hungry ghost festival 070808 03“We use to have an understanding between the mosques and state government but unfortunately this is not happening as much anymore despite our advice to them,” he added.

Penang Faith Association (Persatuan Iman) president Mohamed Rabi expressed his concerns over the loud noise during the festival from an education perspective.

He said the excessive noise level does not only distress the Muslim community from a religious perspective but also affected students from all communities who are studying, especially at night.

“Being disturbed by the loud-blaring noise for several hours, students would end up tired and not able to concentrate on their studies in the morning,” said the former teacher.

“I was a former teacher from Han Chiang (Chinese) school, and my students have complained to me about their restless nights during the festival. I pitied them a lot,” he said.

“The noise also affects senior citizens. It does not only affect the Muslim community but the Chinese as well as since most of them live within this area,” he added.

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