

**Nightlife hub: Perkasa Youth gives thumbs up  
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Malay NGO Perkasa today raised eyebrows by supporting the proposal to build designated entertainment zones, including 10 nightclubs, by 2014.

In a mobile text message to *Malaysiakini*, Perkasa Youth chief Arman Azhar Abu Haniffa (*right*) said that they support the idea as putting the clubs in designated zones will mean better regulation and monitoring.

"We do not compromise with issues of religion and protect religion, race and our nation.

"That is why we believe it is better to allocate a hub for (such) operations to fulfill 'their' requests in a designated area (as) it will facilitate monitoring activities, in terms of security and crime," he said.

In his argument, Arman who had previously declared 'war' against controversial rapper Namewee, said that the new proposal is better than the current situation where nightclubs are everywhere.

The ETP roadmap states that the new nightclubs will be in specially-allocated areas at least 100m away from "residential and religious areas", in the Klang Valley, Langkawi, Penang, Genting and Kota Kinabalu.

However, there is no indication that the new clubs will replace the ones already in operation in various locations across Malaysia.

'Gov't destroying its own people'

Muslim Consumers' Association (PPIM) secretary general Dr Ma'amor Osman (*left*), however, was less forgiving.

"I would like to 'congratulate' (the government) for destroying its own people," he said sarcastically when contacted.

Asked what the NGO plans to do to express their discontent, he said: "We don't go (to these clubs), so we can't say that we will boycott them, (so) just wait for the next general election."

The NGO had previously been at the forefront of boycott campaigns against products from the United States and from Jewish manufacturers.

This is an Islamic country

Ulama Association of Malaysia (PUM) too were unimpressed, and urged the government to rethink their decision and is prepared to provide suggestions if required.

According to its secretary-general Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, the proposal is inappropriate as Malaysia is an Islamic country.

"As an Islamic country the government should instead allow tourists the opportunity to understand our Islamic heritage and experience how Muslims live peacefully with those of other religions... Develop as a halal hub and introduce halal tourism as a niche," he said.

He added that the proposal is a cause for concern, especially today, because the nation is faced with social issues such as baby dumping and drug abuse.

Umno AGM would have disagreed

Similarly, Federal Territories Pas Youth Herman Samsudeen expressed disappointment that the government did not heed the sensitivities of the rakyat.

He said that he was confident that even Umno members are not happy with the proposal, and that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is "lucky" that the ETP launch was after the Umno general assembly.

He added that government should instead focus on promoting eco-tourism and use Malaysia's multiculturalism as a draw.

"Tourists come here to see things they cannot see in their own countries. Concerts, nightclubs, casinos and spas are abundant where they come from," he said.

Additional reporting by Aidila Razak

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