

Jakim's Advice For Muslims Only Says Muhyiddin
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KUALA LUMPUR -- The advice given by Jakim, the Islamic Development Department, on Valentine Day celebrations is directed solely at Muslims, Muhyiddin Yassin said yesterday.

"It is to inform Muslims that the celebrations are not suitable for them, which does not mean that we want to demean Valentine's Day or disrespect other communities," the Deputy Prime Minister told reporters here.

He hoped that there was no misunderstanding caused by the advice from Jakim director general Wan Mohamad Sheikh Abd Aziz, who called on Muslims yesterday to stay away from Valentine's Day celebrations and avoid indecent behaviour.

Muhyiddin said:"There are practices that are regarded as suitable by others but not so in Islam because of their nature and the history associated with them."

Although Valentine's day is often associated with a Christian saint, some legends concerning it predate Christianity. And many churches say that the day is not religiously observed in Malaysia or worldwide.

On the plan by PAS Youth to have "immorality checks" on Valentine's Day in Kedah, Kelantan and Selangor, which are under the opposition pack, Muhyiddin said that such action was rather extreme.

"As Muslims, we emphasise advice. Don't ruffle the sensibilities of communities for whom the celebrations have become a practice," he said.

Meanwhile, Transport Minister Kong Cho Ha said Valentine's Day celebrations should not have any religious connotation.

"Celebrating Valentine's Day is just to strengthen relationships, not necessarily between young couples but also between old married couples," he said.

(Bernama)