

Unscrupulous Actions, Unethical Behaviour
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Wild tales are being told and blatant lies are being spread with impunity. What is being done is to deliberately create uneasiness, anger and hatred against the Christians and their faith in order to undo our peace and unity.

Christian bashing has become a way of life for some unscrupulous people that their conduct seriously threatens to undermine our harmony. It would appear that these people are intent on causing chaos to promote their evil political agenda on behalf of the Barisan Nasional and Umno.

All kinds of absurd rumours have been spread to suggest that there is a conspiracy to turn Malaysia into a Christian state. Accusations have been levelled that rampant attempts are underway to convert Muslims to Christianity.

On 5 November 2006, the mufti of Perak, Harussani Zakaria, spread a malicious and vicious rumour that a church in Ipoh was conducting a baptism ceremony for Muslims. As a result, about 300 Muslims gathered at the Ipoh church in Jalan Silibin to protest against the 'conversion', forcing the police to be called in. This incident could have led to an ugly religious clash.

According to Sisters in Islam (SIS) programme manager Norhayati Kaprawi, "this is not the first time the mufti has made careless statements and allegations." She cited a number of previous statements made by the mufti, including in February where Harussani claimed that between 100000 and 250000 Muslims had renounced Islam.

To date he has not been able to furnish any proof for his outlandish claim, which had the potential to outrage Muslim sensibilities. He did not even do the decent thing that is expected of a person who had genuinely committed an error. There was no remorse; there was no apology.

The latest claims by the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais) – that it had found that eight ways by which Christian missionaries are spreading the Gospel, one of which is by means of a high-tech device called a 'Solar-Powered Handheld Talking Bible' – is ridiculous and appalling.

Selangor state exco member in charge of Islamic affairs Hassan Ali revealed that the other ways in which the 'Good Word' is being spread to convert Muslims include setting up welfare groups to extend financial and other forms of assistance to single mothers, the poor, the elderly and others.

He further stated that, in addition to cash, inducements by Christians to the target groups also come in the form of the provision of daily necessities, capital for business purposes and other aid.

If Hassan has so much irrefutable evidence, then he should make a police report. It is a moral responsibility that he should exercise immediately. Very likely, the police will spring into action. In matters of this nature, we can expect the police to be super efficient.

If indeed there was evidence, then the culprits attempting to convert the Muslims should be prosecuted. Aliran very strongly supports such prosecution for any violations of the law.

The very fact that no one has been charged so far would mean that Hassan and the others of his ilk

should stop talking nonsense and behave in a reverential manner befitting their religious personage. They bring shame to their office and lose their dignity and they can never be looked upon as respected religious leaders.

This unverified wild claim of conversions to Christianity raises a very pertinent question. Is the faith of the Muslims so weak and superficial that Muslims can be so easily swayed, induced and bribed to renounce their faith in spite of the fact "the al-Quran is disseminated through loud speakers, television, radio and at government functions," as pointed out by former Perlis mufti Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin?

Doesn't this situation call for some soul searching as to why – in spite of great efforts made and billions of ringgit spent on building mosques, suraus, madrasahs, religious instructions, al-Quran reading competitions – all this had failed to strengthen the faith of the Muslims? Does this suggest that the method of religious teachings undertaken to instil the Islamic faith among the Muslims is either totally wrong or utterly ineffective.

The Attorney-General should have instituted action against those for spreading false information. Their act was blatant, unscrupulous and demeaning to Islam. Wasn't Lim Guan Eng made to serve 18 months of imprisonment for 'spreading false information'? Why didn't he deserve the tolerance that these people seem to be enjoying and benefiting from?

The Prime Minister should take to task these people who spread false information so that others will not be reckless in stating things that are far removed from truth. He has a moral responsibility to safeguard truth and justice in the national interest and preserve our peace and harmony.

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