

## **Season Of Christian Bashing For Hasan Ali**

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**By Mariam Mokhtar**

In the lead up to Christmas, it appears that the season of goodwill has been replaced by the season of Christian bashing, at least in the state of Selangor.

During question time at the Selangor state assembly, the state executive councillor Dr Hasan Ali, who is also the PAS leader, claimed that the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (JAIS) had discovered an audio device which had been used to proselytise Muslims in Selangor.

Hasan claimed that the solar-powered "hand-held audio Bible" had been discovered by JAIS during its investigation into the proselytisation of Muslims in Selangor.

He said, "The research also revealed several efforts by the Christian community to convert Muslims by setting up welfare groups, giving financial aid and other forms of assistance to single mothers, the poor and the elderly.

"The hand-held Bible was also used to preach", he declared and added that the word Allah had also been used in a Bahasa Malaysia version of The Bible.

Hasan Ali is no stranger to controversy. Last August, he defended an illegal JAIS raid on a thanksgiving dinner at the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) premises, because he claimed JAIS had found "evidence of proselytisation of Muslims."

In complete contrast was the Selangor Menteri Besar, Khalid Ibrahim who had expressed regret over the incident and ordered a detailed investigation.

But the ensuing result, outraged both Muslims and non-Muslims, and raised more questions than answers, because the Sultan of Selangor, who is defender of the faith in the state, decreed that "no one would be charged over the raid because of insufficient evidence". He then went on to say that Muslims present at the dinner, would have to be counseled.

Perhaps, if anyone should take heed, it would be the PAS deputy president, Mat Sabu.

At a Bagan Dapsy (Dapsy is the youth wing for DAP) fundraising dinner in Butterworth, in early October, Mat Sabu warned the crowd of BN's propaganda machinations to try to undermine the opposition.

His allegations centred on BN's strategy called the 3R program whereby race, religion and royalty would be used to propagate a culture of fear in the people and try to make them vote BN in GE-13.

Mat Sabu said, "If these discrepancies were found true after proper verification, Barisan Nasional would recapture Selangor in the next general election.

"BN now propagates various malicious lies using the 3R strategy to undermine Pakatan and woo voters using fear tactics."

Fresh in his mind was the cow-head demonstration, non-Muslims being banned from using the word "Allah", churches being fire-bombed and Penang Chief minister Lim Guan Eng's comments

about Johor which had upset its Sultan.

Mat Sabu probably did not realise, last October, that one of the greatest threats would be in the form of his fellow PAS member, the Selangor PAS leader Dr Hasan Ali.

Is Hasan Ali a rogue PAS member or is he in league with Umno?

Hasan used religion to instill fear and hatred in the Malays by claiming that their religion was under threat. He seems indirectly to be manoeuvring the Sultan of Selangor into an invidious position.

Hasan seems to have adopted Umno's strategy of using the 3Rs to undermine the opposition and used all three elements in one fell swoop in the latest "solar-powered talking Bible" case.

One does not need the solar-powered hand-held device. Anyone who wishes to see the Indonesian/Malay versions of The Holy Bible can download a copy from the internet.

Nevertheless, Hasan Ali is more daft than he looks. He has insulted the intelligence and integrity of Malays and Muslims by his allegations.

What makes Hasan think that a Muslim can be converted to Christianity by listening to readings from The Bible? Did he listen to the recordings and think there was something in the readings of The Bible that made him question his own faith? Perhaps his own religious roots are not as strong as most Muslims.

The millions of non-Muslims who live near to a surau or mosque and who have no choice but to listen to Koranic tape-recordings blaring-out five times a day, have not become Muslims have they?

It appears that both Hasan and JAIS have little knowledge of what makes a person embrace a faith, whether it is one they are born into or one they adopt or discard, in later life.

For over a century, several hundreds of thousands of Malayan/Malaysian children have been indoctrinated in Mission Schools, but the non-Christians have remained staunch believers of their own faiths despite having to recite the Lord's prayer at assembly every morning.

If Hasan Ali claims Muslims have been converted, how many are there, where are they and why did they convert?

The Hasan Ali diatribe appears to have popped up at a critical time, just when the public is angry about the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) scandal involving the Women Family and Community Development Minister, Shahrizat Abdul Jalil.

Hasan Ali and his solar-powered talking Bible is a red herring to divert the nation's attention from Shahrizat and her family's abuse of RM250 million of taxpayer's money.

The public is furious for many reasons; The project was awarded to her husband and three children and its been disclosed, in the Auditor-General's report, that the project was a mess and failed to meet its targets.

No wonder the project failed. We have learned that RM800,000 was allegedly spent by Shahrizat and her family on overseas vacations, two luxury condominiums worth around RM7 million each

were purchased and she awarded herself RM26,400 in expenses.

The Deputy Prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin said Shahrizat was not involved even though the money trail leads to her. What were her expenses if she had nothing to do with the project?

Never mind talking Bibles because if our faith is strong, no one can dislodge it.

However, the endemic corruption in our Cabinet and the lackadaisical, indolent attitude of our ministers must be dealt with urgently.

### **MARIAM MOKHTAR**

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