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More flak against Nurul

The Star - 8/11/2012

Leaders blast PKR veep over religion remark that sparked outrage

KUALA LUMPUR: A PAS MP has offered to seek an audience with the Sultan of Selangor over PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar's remark that Malay Muslims should be free to choose their own faith.

Central committee member Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said PAS was convinced that the Sultan did not have accurate information about the comments, which had since stirred a controversy.

"The Selangor Islamic Affairs Council (Mais) may not have explained accurately to the Sultan. I have good relations with the Sultan. I can convey Nurul Izzah's true statement to the Sultan," he told reporters in Parliament lobby here yesterday.

Nurul Izzah, who is Lembah Pantai MP, was reported as saying at a forum on Saturday that no one should be compelled to adopt a par-

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-TAN SRI MUHYIDDIN YASSIN

ticular religion and this applied to the Malays as well.

Following a public outcry, she denied that she was supporting *mur-tad* (apostasy) or encouraging Muslims to renounce Islam and that she was ready to meet the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais).

The Sultan had since expressed his regret and surprise over her statement while Jais director Datuk Marzuki Husin said it could act against the first-time MP if it had information on what she exactly said.

Expressing his disappointment

over the remarks, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said even experts and the Sultan of Selangor had expressed their regret.

"I hope she realises that her statement should not have been made," he said, describing Nurul Izzah's contention that Malay dailies had "twisted" her comments as a "common tactic".

In **KOTA BARU**, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said Nurul Izzah's remarks should be broadcast so that people could derive their own conclusion.

In **KUALA LUMPUR**, *Bernama* reported former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as reminding Muslims that western liberalism, including the freedom to change religion, would not be appropriate for the country.

In **JASIN**, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the Quranic verses cited by Nurul Izzah to support her argument were out of context as they were meant for non-Muslims who should not be coerced into embracing Islam.

Welcoming the move by Jais to investigate Nurul Izzah, Selangor Mentri Besar Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim said it must do so proactively.

In the Dewan Rakyat, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Mashitah Ibrahim told Datuk Mohamad Aziz (BN - Sri Gading) that no religious enactments could be used to charge Muslims for trying to promote religious freedom.

However, she said they could be charged for insulting Islam, which carries a RM3,000 fine or two years in jail or both.