

Anwar: When in doubt, contact MKI

Non-Muslims asked to write in to seek clarification on Islamic matters

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PETALING JAYA: Non-Muslims can contact the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs Malaysia (MKI) to seek clarification on Islamic matters, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said he fully backed the call by the Selangor Ruler, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, who urged non-Muslims to respect and refrain from interfering in matters relating to Islamic affairs.

“However, if there are any concerns and to avoid any confusion, non-Muslims can write to MKI for the issues to be resolved in a harmonious and civilised manner,” he said in a statement on his social media accounts yesterday.

On Friday, in a statement posted on the Selangor Royal Office’s Facebook page, the Selangor Ruler said non-Muslims must refrain from interfering in matters relating to Islamic affairs.

His Royal Highness was responding to a recent proposal by DAP’s Beruas MP Datuk Ngeh Koo Ham

to include non-Muslim legal experts in the special committee to study the proposal to strengthen the Syariah Court’s role.

Sultan Sharafuddin, who is the MKI chairman, expressed hope that politicians, especially non-Muslims, would be careful with their comments on Islamic matters.

“Instead, non-Muslims should emulate Muslims, who do not interfere in the religious affairs of other faiths in Malaysia,” said His Royal Highness, adding that the special committee consists of

experts who are well-versed in various aspects involving legal issues and Islamic affairs.

Sultan Sharafuddin said he had also taken note of the statement issued by DAP secretary-general Anthony Loke on Friday, in which the latter expressed regret over Ngeh’s statement, calling it “an oversight”.

On Thursday, Ngeh said the Federal Government’s recently-formed committee headed by former chief justice Tun Zaki Azmi to study conflicts between syariah laws and the Federal

Constitution does not seem to have any non-Muslims on board.

In November, Anwar said the government was looking to form the special committee sanctioned by the Conference of Rulers, with the official formation of the committee later announced on Dec 5.

The committee’s purpose is to study ways to enhance the powers of the Syariah Court over Muslims while ensuring that it would not affect non-Muslims, along with reviewing the competency of the various state legislatures in formulating syariah laws.