

PM REBUKES TIONG OVER ALCOHOL GAFFE

Anwar says all govt agencies, ministers must be aware of rules against booze at official events

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has issued a stern rebuke to Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing and his ministry over the serving of alcohol at one of its recent events.

Anwar said the government's policy was clear that alcoholic beverages should not be served at official events.

"Everyone in the government institution, including ministers, must be more aware and sensitive about the rules and regulations.

"The actions of the minister and the ministry are extremely regrettable. They have been issued a stern warning not to repeat the offence.

"The entire government machinery has been reminded against being callous on such matters and they must ensure, that such mistakes do not recur," he said yesterday.

On the sidelines of the 34th Asean Socio-Cultural Community Council Meeting and Related Meetings earlier, Anwar said the ministry had explained its stand on the matter, but what happened was still inappropriate.

"The ministry said it took place

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DATUK SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM .
Prime minister

after the official event ended. Nevertheless, it took place at the same venue.”

At the same event, Tiong declined to comment when pressed for a response,

“I have already answered. That is enough.”

Tiong had dismissed allegations by Masjid Tanah member of parliament Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin that alcoholic drinks served at the Global Travel Meet dinner on Oct 1 had forced Muslim guests to leave early.

Photos from the event showing Tiong and guests holding glasses of wine and beer have gone viral, sparking criticism over perceived disregard for official protocol and public sensitivities.

At a press conference at the Parliament building yesterday, Mas Ermieyati said the opposition wanted Tiong to apologise and step down from his post.

“Perikatan Nasional calls on the prime minister to remove the minister from his position. As a responsible minister, he (Tiong) must bear moral responsibility for this embarrassing incident.

“The failure to respect religious

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DATUK SERI TIONG KING SING
Tourism, arts and culture minister

sensitivities reflects a lapse in leadership that cannot be taken lightly.”

She said PN also wants the Public Service Department to audit the appointment process for officers in Tourism Malaysia and its related agencies.

She said the National Audit Department and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission should probe the ministry's allocations and expenditures.

Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming said the issue should not be blown out of proportion and that politicising the matter could affect Visit Malaysia 2026.

The Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry pledged to tighten monitoring and compliance with event guidelines and ethical standards following the public backlash.

In a statement yesterday, it expressed “deep regret” over the incident, which triggered widespread criticism and discomfort among the public.

“The ministry takes this incident as a valuable lesson and is committed to ensuring that such occurrences are not repeated.

“The ministry will ensure all programmes under its purview strictly adhere to established guidelines and codes of conduct”