

PAS leaders welcome Islamic ruling on loudspeakers
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PAS leaders have welcomed the Penang Fatwa Council's decision to prohibit the use of mosque loudspeakers at pre-dawn for other than the call to prayer.

Murshidul Am Tuan Guru Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said the prohibition was in accordance with Islam teachings and and Prophet Muhammad's examples.

"We (Muslims) are only allowed to raise our voice for the *azan* (call to prayer) and leave aside temporarily the world's matters," said Nik Aziz.

The Kelantan Menteri Besar reminded Muslims not to blast Qur'anic recitation over loudspeakers as their action could disturb children and the sick, as well as others who require sleep during that time.

UMNO-controlled media recently had been up in arms against a circular by the Penang Islamic Affairs Department's (JHEAIPP) instructing mosques and suraus in the state to stop the use of loudspeakers in broadcasting Quran recitation at dawn.

The instruction was inline with a decision by the state fatwa council on April 7.

Leading the charge, UMNO vice president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the Penang state government was behind the fatwa.

'UMNO's hypocrisy'

In response, PAS information chief Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man said Zahid had insulted the state Mufti and Penang Islamic Religious Council who had both done proper study over the matter before reaching a decision.

"Imagine if the statement (by Zahid) comes from Penang chief minister Lim Guan Eng – it will definitely create a frenzy of protests from UMNO and its cousin Perkasa," chided Tuan Ibrahim.

Tuan Ibrahim also blasted UMNO's 'hypocrisy' in speaking out for Islam only in Pakatan Rakyat states.

"When the Melaka government extended operating hours for entertainment centres to 3.00am, no voice from UMNO and Perkasa leaders condemning Melaka for being insensitive to Muslims during Ramadan month.

"For religion, race and country... only, and only, when there's political mileage. This is the double-faced leaders of UMNO," he added.

PAS Youth chief Nasrudin Hasan Tantawi also supported the fatwa.

"We feel this is a correct move as the Prophet had prohibited his followers from reciting their prayers in a manner which disturbed others performing their worship. The reading of the Quranic verses using loudspeaker is done at 4am or 4.30am and this could disturb the young children, or individuals who pray at their homes.

"This is the beauty of Islam. Most don't realise (it is wrong) as they feel that (reading the Qur'an using loudspeakers) is an act of worship," he said.

Earlier, Perlis Mufti Juanda Jaya and his predecessor Asri Zainul Abidin also threw their support behind the fatwa.

"The practice of turning up the volume before dawn goes against the Prophet's teachings, because it disturbs those who are still asleep.

"Such acts of disturbing others is forbidden and a sin," said Juanda, while Asri said, "We cannot force others to listen to our prayers."

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