

Hasan Ali says gathering proof of Christian proselytism
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 — Bent on proving Christians were converting Malay Muslims in Selangor, Datuk Hasan Ali said today his research unit has found 41 apostates in Petaling Jaya and will continue to collect more “profound” data to back his case.

The state executive councillor in charge of Islamic affairs told reporters the 41 apostates were mostly women aged between 30 and 60-years old who were from low-income households.

He postulated that the figure was likely only the tip of the iceberg, with the actual number being much bigger.

“It could be hundreds, maybe even thousands,” he said.

“No one has gathered information and made the statistics,” he added, saying he had set up two-and-half months ago a research unit he called “USA”, short for “Unit Selamatkan Akidah (Faith Rescue Unit)”, to collect the data and persuade the apostates to return to Islam.

“We are helping them, hoping they will come back to Islam,” he said.

The ex-PAS state commissioner appeared taken aback when challenged to prove his theory by a foreign news reporter who pointed out that the so-called apostates could have voluntarily embraced Christianity and were not induced to do so as alleged.

“Are you a Malaysian?” he asked. When she answered no, he explained that there were state laws against the propagation of religions other than Islam to Muslims.

When asked if he had pushed for the prosecution of Christian groups or individuals allegedly involved in proselytising their religion to Muslims, Hasan told reporters that he was researching for more “profound evidence”.

This latest disclosure, after a controversial August 3 raid by Selangor Islamic authorities (Jais) on the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) in Petaling Jaya, risks further strain to already tense Christian-Muslim ties.

Christian leaders have consistently denied claims that they are attempting to convert Muslims, but relations between the two creeds with roots in the Middle East continue to smoulder in multi-religious, multi-cultural Malaysia where the religion of the federation is Islam as stated in the Federal Constitution.

Last month, Hasan told the Selangor Legislative Assembly that evangelical Christians are using high-tech devices such as solar-powered talking bibles to proselytise to Malay Muslims in the state.

The lawmaker also said Jais is seeking to strengthen the enforcement of the Non-Islamic

Religions (Control of Propagation Amongst Muslims) Enactment 1988 as well as the Syariah Criminal Offences Enactment 1995.

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