

**Perkasa says will usurp PAS as Islam's defenders**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 14 — Perkasa proclaimed today that it will take over PAS's role as defenders of Islam from now on, after accusing the Islamist party of failing in its own objective of upholding Islamic principles.

The Malay rights group slammed PAS for what they described as weakness when dealing with Islamic matters, saying it had abandoned its values for political expediency.

"From today on, Perkasa has taken over PAS's duty as defenders of Islam. PAS is no longer an Islamic party as we have decided to take over all issues related to the religion," Perkasa president Datuk Ibrahim Ali said at a press conference here today.

Ibrahim cited the recent edict by the Penang Fatwa Committee barring mosques from using loud speakers to broadcast Quran recitals and the morning call to prayer, before slamming Kelantan Menteri Besar and PAS spiritual adviser Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat's support for the edict, claiming the religious leader no longer has "the heart" for religious affairs.

"I challenge him then to do the same and order all mosques in Kelantan not to use the loud speakers," he said.

Ibrahim claimed that Muslims in the country have never complained about the practices of other religions, naming the kavadi procession during Thaipusam or the use of loud bells at Hindu mosques or Buddhist temples as examples.

"We have never complained. For Thaipusam, they close the roads even, making noise and causing traffic jams but we do not complain," he said.

Ibrahim also urged the government not to consider allowing United Examination Certificate (UEC) holders to be admitted into public varsities, saying the examination is not a part of the government's education system.

"They have created a technical committee to look into this but our view is that a committee should not have even been formed.

"If that is the case, why not I open my own private school and then start my own education. Will the students be allowed to enter public universities then?" he asked.

He added that Perkasa will prepare a comprehensive memorandum to be submitted to the government on the matter.

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