

**Penang Mufti says no coercion in Quran broadcast ban**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**August 15, 2011**

GEORGE TOWN, Aug 15 — Penang Mufti Datuk Seri Hassan Ahmad today said the decision by the state fatwa council banning loudspeaker broadcasts of Quran readings at dawn was not the result of outside pressure.

The Islamic cleric also denied that the ban included the azan (Muslim call to prayer), before clarifying that the decision was an advisory and not an edict as widely reported.

"I am disappointed over the unprofessional and ill-mannered statements from all quarters, including accusations that the state Fatwa Council decided on the matter in a reckless manner," Hassan was quoted in a Bernama Online report today.

"This matter is not a political issue but is a directive from Prophet Muhammad and also to safeguard a harmonious Islam."

Hassan explained that under Section 45 Penang Islamic Enactment 2004, fatwas require the consent of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as the head of Islam before they could be issued.

The state's ban on loudspeaker broadcasts of Quran readings had received the support of Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat, who advised Muslims to consider the sensitivities of their neighbours when practising their faith.

The PAS spiritual leader's backing of the ruling became political fodder when Malay rights group Perkasa seized upon it to declare themselves the new defenders of Islam, saying Nik Aziz's remarks meant the Islamist party was no longer committed to the religion.

This in turn prompted Umno to announce today that they were the "true" protectors of the faith.

PAS, meanwhile, said Perkasa's remarks were acknowledgment of the party's role in safeguarding Islam.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/penang-mufti-says-no-coercion-in-quran-broadcast-ban/>