

Don't drag Sultan into Jais debacle, says PAS
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KUALA LUMPUR, 18 Ogos — PAS chided the Selangor Islamic Religious Council's (Mais) claim that the furore surrounding a church raid by religious authorities was disrespectful to the Sultan as the head of Islam in the state.

PAS leaders told The Malaysian Insider that the question of disputing the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais) actions or disrespecting the Sultan did not arise as the public simply wanted an explanation.

"If it can be solved at a lower level, there is no need to bring in the Selangor Sultan.

"We base our statements on facts and in this issue, we are not disputing but asking for an explanation," Selangor PAS chief Abdul Rani Osman said.

Jais had said that it was acting on a complaint that Muslims were being proselytised at the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) last week but the church has insisted that it was only hosting a local NGO's thanksgiving dinner.

But earlier today, Mais chief Datuk Mohd Adzib Isa said that those who were questioning Jais were also disrespecting the Sultan.

"If you question Jais' action, then it is also questioning the powers of the Sultan. Mais is under the Sultan and Jais is under Mais. Jais is a free body and not tied to the state government," he had said.

PAS information chief Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man also said that even though Jais was under the powers of the Sultan, it is still an agency under the Selangor administration which has an executive council portfolio for religious affairs.

"Jais' action involves public interest. We are not questioning their powers but the enforcement of the powers raises questions. What is being disputed is Jais enforcement and not the powers of the Sultan.

If we observe Jais, we can see they are sometimes prejudiced," he said.

Vice president Datuk Mahfuz Omar also added that what was being questioned was the involvement of Umno in the inspection of the church.

"No one is questioning Jais. We have said if there is proof of proselytising then take action. But we are concerned that action was not taken according to procedure but only to fulfil Umno's political interests," the Pokok Sena MP said.

PAS secretary general Datuk Mustafa Ali has alleged that Umno played a role in the affair and said he was ready to present proof to Jais director Marzuki Hussin.

Jais has come under fire from various parties and has been accused of trespassing but several Islamic groups have defended Jais, which has continued investigations into the matter and summoned 12 Muslims found at the event for questioning.

The furore over Jais' actions is the latest in a series of issues surrounding Christians in the country who hardline Muslims accuse of not respecting Islam.

A legal dispute that has yet to be resolved over the use of Allah by Christians led to the firebombing of places of worship at the beginning of last year.

The government was also forced to release 35,100 Malay-language bibles seized under the Internal Security Act before the April 16 state polls in Sarawak which has the country's largest population of Christians.

Earlier this year, the Umno-owned Utusan Malaysia also accused the DAP of conspiring with church leaders to turn Malaysia into a Christian state and install a Christian prime minister.

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