

Mais: Questioning Jais is a slur against Selangor Ruler
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SHAH ALAM, Aug 18 — The Selangor Islamic Religious Council (Mais) has pronounced that those who have questioned the raid by religious authorities on a church two weeks ago are disrespecting the Sultan as the head of Islam in the state.

Mais chairman Datuk Mohd Adzib Isa told The Malaysian Insider that such an action is seen as disrespectful because the enforcement body, the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais), answers to the Sultan and not the state government.

"The Selangor Sultan is the head of religion in the state and Mais is under him while Jais is under Mais. Jais is a free department and not tied to the state government.

"If you question Jais' action, then it is also questioning the powers of the Sultan. Islamic affairs are under the Sultan but many do not understand this," he said in an interview.

The Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) has come into the spotlight recently after Jais acted on a complaint that Muslims were being proselytised at a fundraising dinner there on August 3.

Jais has come under fire from various parties including the church which has insisted that it was only hosting a thanksgiving dinner for a local NGO and accused Jais of trespassing.

However, several Islamic groups have defended Jais, which has continued investigations into the matter and summoned 12 Muslims found at the event for questioning.

In a speech at an Islamic seminar at the state mosque yesterday, Mohd Adzib had also said that Mais was the "main adviser" to the Sultan on Islamic matters and "functions as a policymaker for Islamic affairs."

"Therefore, Mais is not just a government agency that takes orders from others but it is the primary authority on Islam after the Sultan," he said to an audience of about 100, stressing that Jais is "the implementation machinery for the policies decided on by Mais."

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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