

**Talk to inter-faith panel, Koh urges Himpun**  
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**By Yow Hong Chieh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 19 – Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon has urged Himpun Sejuta Umat’s organisers to take up their claims that Christians were trying to convert Muslims with the Cabinet inter-faith panel.

Earlier today, the national unity minister had defended Muslims’ right to rally in protest against Christians “challenging the sovereignty” of Islam, as long as they did so peacefully.

“However, acknowledging public concern that such a rally may get out of control, it is better to bring the issue for discussion in the inter-faith panel,” he said in a statement today.

Himpunan Sejuta Umat (Himpun) was organised by various right-wing religious groups calling for Muslims to rise up and fight the “challenge of Christianisation”.

The mass rally was mooted following the controversial August 3 raid by Selangor Islamic authorities on Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC), where it was alleged that Christians were converting Muslims.

It is illegal to proselytise Muslims in Malaysia.

Some 1,000 Facebook users so far have promised to show up but Himpun could push Umno and PAS to seek relevance among more religious Malays if the rally at Shah Alam Stadium this weekend pulls a larger than expected crowd.

With racial tension stoked in recent years by church firebombings and the cow head protest, Saturday’s rally could resurrect fears of growing Islamisation among non-Muslims and more liberal Malays.

Christian leaders have denied claims that Christians were attempting to convert Muslims and have called Himpun’s fight “irrelevant”.

Similarly, Pakatan Rakyat (PR) has said it will not support the rally as Islam was not at risk from Christianisation.

MCA president Datuk Seri Chua Soi Lek today urged organisers to call off Himpun or risk inflaming racial sensitivities.

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