

**Hasan Ali backs Jais raid, says 'Quran' and 'Pray' used in front of Muslims**  
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Selangor state exco Datuk Hasan Ali

SHAH ALAM, Aug 4 — Selangor executive councillor Datuk Hasan Ali defended today a late-night state Islamic enforcement raid on a church in Petaling Jaya yesterday, saying the words “Quran” and “pray” were used in the presence of Muslims at the dinner function.

He claimed this was part of the authorities’ evidence that Christians were proselytising to Muslims.

Widely seen as a religious conservative, Hasan has been at odds with the ruling Pakatan Rakyat (PR) state government’s seemingly liberal policies on several occasions, most notably his push for a beer sale ban in the country’s most developed state earlier this year.

Hasan had lost badly in the recent PAS election as the Islamist party moved to embrace leaders like Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad who is seen to represent a more progressive and inclusive brand of Islam.

Dropped as PAS Selangor chief after the party polls, Hasan’s statement today is seen to rebuff his tendency to mirror rival Malay party Umno’s thinking.

“Towards the end of the event, the enforcement team and the police had made checks and found attempts to prevent their examination and to get rid of the evidence material,” the PAS man said in a statement faxed to *The Malaysian Insider* this evening.

He said the authorities had discovered further materials to prove there was activity to proselytise a religion other than Islam to Muslims, but did not disclose what they were.

Hasan added that several Muslims had attempted to flee the premises through the church's back door but were successfully stopped by Jais.

He also denied the authorities had carried out a "raid" on the church as alleged, saying instead it was merely an "examination" that was based on a report that Muslims had attended the church dinner's "break fast" event.

"There was no raid and no arrests. Instead, examinations were conducted after negotiations with the organiser," he said.

Hasan said 12 Muslims who attended the dinner have been ordered to turn up at the Jais enforcement office for further investigation.

"Based on initial investigations those involved can be charged under Section 10 of the Syariah Criminal Enactment 1995."

The executive councillor in charge of Islamic religious affairs' remarks came just after Selangor Mentri Besar Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim moved to calm the uproar over the raid.

Earlier today, Khalid had asked the state Islamic authorities to justify their raid on the multiracial dinner at a Petaling Jaya church last night, adding he regretted the incident that has caused a public outrage.

A group from the Jabatan Agama Islam Selangor (Jais) raided the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) building during a dinner and had questioned a few Malay guests based on an unspecified complaint.

Khalid said today he had called DUMC's senior pastor Daniel Ho to personally express his regrets regarding the incident.

"I told him that the state has instructed Jais to provide a full report detailing the incident, including their justifications for their actions that night. I hope to meet the pastor again once the report is completed," said the Mentri Besar in a statement this evening,

He also assured the people of Selangor that the state government fully respects freedom of religion and the rights of religious groups to manage their affairs.

In the statement, Khalid sought to contain growing outrage over the incident by saying that "the state is always open to engagement and dialogue regarding the harmonious and mutually respectful coexistence of different religious communities, and appreciates the efforts of all who seek to build a more united society".

In a statement today, DUMC's senior pastor Ho related how a group of 20 to 30 of Selangor's religious police had entered its rented premises at the Dream Centre in Petaling Jayan without a warrant and intimidated invited guests, including Muslims, at its private dinner celebration last night.

"They have subjected all guests at the Thanksgiving Dinner to undue harassment," he said, noting that not all the enforcement group were in uniform and had failed to produce a copy of the complaint when asked for the reason for the raid.

Ho stressed that the dinner was non-religious in nature but held to celebrate the work of non-profit organisation Harapan Komuniti in helping women, children, HIV/AIDS sufferers and victims of natural disasters.

“We call on all Malaysians not to condone this breach of freedom of assembly and association as provided by provided Article 10 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia, but to live in mutual trust and love, to promote peace, harmony and unity in the true spirit of 1 Malaysia,” he said.

The pastor told *The Malaysian Insider* last night that the thanksgiving dinner organised by Harapan Komuniti was attended by between 100 and 120 guests of all races.

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