

## Islamic groups defend Jais raid

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 8 — Several Islamic groups have united in support of the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais) raid on a church in Petaling Jaya last Wednesday which has sparked an outcry.

Muslim Organisations in Defence of Islam (Pembela) leader Dr Yusri Mohamed said today that Jais did not “storm”, “raid” and “barge” into the Damansara Utama Methodist Church (DUMC) as portrayed in the media.



“Based on information obtained from Jais, the reason for inspection was to see if there were Muslims present during the function and to make sure there was no derogation of Islam,” Yusri **(picture)** told reporters here.

“The operation was carried out in accordance to principles and provisions of existing law.”

Yusri added that media portrayal of the operation was misleading as Jais had negotiated with the charity dinner organisers at the DUMC for one hour to no avail.

Pertubuhan Muafakat Sejahtera Masyarakat Malaysia (Muafakat) secretary-general A. Karim Omar said according to Jais reports, “Jais only went in after the function was over, not during’.

Pembela also accused certain politicians of interfering with Islamic affairs beyond their jurisdiction and said Muslims should not hesitate to rethink the political standing of political leaders who interfere in Islamic affairs.

“Pembela disapproves strongly political interference in Islamic affairs by political leaders who are motivated solely by power.

“The Selangor menteri besar’s statement that is ‘apologetic’ in nature is regrettable and should not have been given while investigations are still ongoing,” Yusri said.

“Also, statements from non-Muslims leaders hurt Muslims and depict Islam as having no standing in this country.

“Statements like these will only add to the confusion and lead to prejudice between Muslims and non-Muslims in the country,” he added.

Pembela stressed that Islamic affairs were regulated and under the jurisdiction of the Sultans.

“This is a fact to be accepted by all, and its limits should be understood (and practised) in everyday life.

“We are not against acts of charity between religions — in fact, this is encouraged,” Yusri said, adding that people should be careful when dealing with issues that could divide the country.

“Pembela requests the authorities to stop behaviours that provoke and undermine Islam as the country’s main religion,” he said.

Last Wednesday, Jais raided a multiracial thanksgiving dinner at DUMC without a warrant on the basis of preventing the conversion of Muslims.

The multiracial dinner was attended by about 100 people, including a dozen Muslims.

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