

Know your limits, Muhyiddin tells 'Seksualiti Merdeka' organisers
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 — The organisers of the "Seksualiti Merdeka" festival should respect Malaysian culture and laws instead of promoting an event which celebrates homosexuality, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

Calling it a "waste of time", the deputy prime minister said even though the government respected the right of the organisers to hold the event, the festival was "non-beneficial" to Malaysians in general.

Muhyiddin described the 'Seksualiti Merdeka' festival as a 'waste of time'. — File pic
He said Malaysia had clear guidelines and legislation outlawing "unnatural" sexual activities such as sodomy, and that the public can decide for themselves whether such a festival was really necessary.

"Malaysia has laws, we have religion, we have values, there are limits that need to be taken into account.

"I don't know why they (organisers) are doing this, maybe there is a political motive, but this (festival) is inappropriate," he told reporters.

The Umno deputy president however said that the government will not stop the event from taking place.

"It is their right to do so but at the same time they have to be mindful of what they are doing, it has to be looked at seriously," he said.

A host of Muslim groups like Perkasa and opposition party PAS have already expressed outrage against "Seksualiti Merdeka", an annual festival to promote sexuality rights in Malaysia.

Perkasa and several other groups lodged police reports yesterday against the programme which goes on until November 13, and demanded the Inspector-General of Police cancel the event.

The groups' outrage also earned front-page news in Malay daily Utusan Malaysia yesterday along with articles on PAS's objection to this month's concert by singer Elton John, a self-admitted homosexual.

Influential Muslim scholar Dr Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin has joined the chorus of disapproval against the "Seksualiti Merdeka" festival, saying today any attempt to justify or proceed with the event "cannot be allowed".

The former Perlis mufti said if the programme was meant to be an open campaign to justify homosexuality and transexuality, it must be rejected by society.

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