

**Yes, revoke Singaporean's PR but why demolish surau, says PAS
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PAS supports the government's decision to revoke the permanent resident (PR) status of the Singaporean resort operator who allowed a group of Buddhists to use the surau in Kota Tinggi for meditation.

Party vice-president Datuk Mahfuz Omar, however, said there was no reason to demolish the surau.

"PAS agrees that if the resort operator had violated the conditions of his PR status, Putrajaya and the Home Ministry are entitled to revoke his PR.

"It is within the authority of the Home Ministry to revoke the PR if the Singaporean had done something which violates the country's laws," he told a press conference at the PAS headquarters.

"However, I don't agree that the surau in question should be demolished. All that is required to is to re-arrange the direction of its prayer for Muslims."

Mahfuz, the Pokok Sena MP, also stressed that the group of Buddhists who meditated there should not be blamed as they had obtained permission from the resort operator.

"The resort operator should be punished, he was the one who had given permission to the group. There are so many halls at the resort, why did he allow them to meditate at the surau?"

Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM) also supported the ministry's decision to revoke the PR status of Singaporean, Syed Ahmad Salim Alkaff.

Chairman Datuk Nakhaie Ahmad called on the government to ban the operator of the resort in Sedili Besar, Kota Tinggi, from entering Malaysia again as punishment for his action.

His call was echoed by Kelantan cleric Datuk Mohamad Shukri Mohamad, who said as the official religion of Malaysia was Islam, appropriate action was needed to teach the operator a lesson.

On Saturday, Home Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi announced the government had revoked the PR status of Syed Ahmad who is the Tanjung Sutera Beach Resort operator.

Syed Ahmad was detained for four days to facilitate investigations into defiling a place of worship.

If charged and found guilty, Syed Ahmad could be imprisoned for two years or fined or both.

Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar has directed that the surau be demolished as soon as investigations are completed.

A video was uploaded onto YouTube on August 10 showing a group of Buddhists in a small building meditating in front of a portrait of the Buddha.

The 63-second long clip was titled "Chinese Buddhist praying in surau, surau converted into temple" was uploaded by Sebastianphiu and received more than 10,000 hits.

The location of the surau was also stated in the video.

Syed Ahmad defended his decision, saying it was only used for meditation and he didn't think it was a serious matter. - August 19, 2013.

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