

Putrajaya moves to defuse religious issue, assures 101-year-old Hindu temple safe

Malaysian Insider

Sept 2 , 2013

BY YISWAREE PALANSAMY

Putrajaya has moved to placate Malaysia's minority Hindus, assuring them today that a 101-year-old temple in the centre of Kuala Lumpur will not be demolished to make way for a pavement.

The attempted demolition yesterday attracted scores of worshippers to protect the temple, raising the temperature in Malaysia's religious landscape and pitting the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) government against politicians from its own coalition.

The location of non-Muslim houses of worship is a hot-button issue, with several incidents of temples being torn down or relocated due to development, especially in central Selangor.

The temple demolitions were among the factors that led to the ruling BN losing Selangor and its two-thirds super majority in parliament in the past two general elections.

But Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor said today the Sri Muneswarar Kaliyaman temple in the central business district will not be demolished.

"Only eight feet of land has been taken, with work already started at the back of the temple," he told reporters after visiting the temple site in Jalan P. Ramlee.

But MIC Youth chief T. Mohan told The Malaysian Insider the authorities were trying to cover up the matter as a part of the 101-year-old temple has already been torn down.

Mohan, whose party is part of BN, said the demolition was intentionally done to accommodate the developer of an adjacent building who failed to get the certificate of fitness (CF).

"I was told that in order to obtain the CF, the developer has to first find room for the walkway. They did not have space on their ground so they encroached into the temple instead.

But Tengku Adnan said once the development of the commercial building is completed, the temple walls will be restored.

The minister also urged the parties concerned not to politicise the issue.

Mohan said police and City Hall officials were trying to cover their tracks by not telling the truth behind the move to demolish the temple located in the city centre.

He said that the statement given by police yesterday that the temple will not be demolished is not true.

"There were statues in the way yesterday which were removed before that section of the temple was torn down," he said.

Mohan said City Hall should be investigated because the series of events that has been unfolding shows that "something is clearly amiss".

"The cabinet had concluded that the temple must not be touched and City Hall has clearly gone against this directive," he added. – September 2, 2013.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/putrajaya-moves-to-defuse-religious-issue-assures-101-year-old-hindu-temple>