

Putrajaya's silence on calls to defend Islam from "threats and insults" is worrying, say Christians
Malaysian Insider
Sept 9 , 2013
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The Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) is concerned over Putrajaya's inaction in cooling rising temperatures on the Allah issue, ahead of the case which will be heard at the Court of Appeal tomorrow.

Its chairman Rev Dr Eu Hong Seng said there had been calls by various groups to defend Islam from being insulted and threatened.

"The call for 'action' by some Muslims is incendiary and alarming to ordinary Malaysians.

"Worst of all, there appears to be no action or statement from any government authority calling for calm or even ordering a stop to such actions, which is clearly stoking anger," Dr Eu said in a statement.

Tomorrow, the court will hear the government's appeal against a 2009 High Court ruling that allows the Catholic Church to use the word Allah in the Herald, a weekly Catholic newspaper.

In documents sighted by The Malaysian Insider recently, it was revealed that Putrajaya aims to use cases of arson attacks on several churches and an incident of vandals tossing a pig's head into a mosque to bolster its argument that there will be tension and trouble if the Court of Appeal upholds the 2009 High Court ruling.

Dr Eu said a television programme with untrue and unsubstantiated accusations were made about so-called Christian plots to convert Muslims.

He also drew attention to the Friday sermon by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), which called for action in defence of Islam by Muslims over the use of the word by Christians.

"Even a cursory examination of these accusations and statements will clearly show that they are emotional and without factual basis," he said.

The undisputed facts, Dr Eu said, are that about 60% of the 2.6 million Christians in Malaysia have been using Allah to refer to God and that Bumiputera Christians have used the Bahasa Malaysia Bible containing the word for a long time without any objection.

He also noted the the problem on the use of "Allah" was an issue unique to Malaysia and not a problem in the Middle East.

As such, CFM called for a stop to the repeated accusations that the use of the word was a Christian conspiracy to convert Muslims.

"This is blatant scare-mongering which provokes religious tension," Dr Eu said.

He instead called on Muslims to understand and appreciate the context of how, when and why Christians use the word Allah, adding that it is carried from centuries ago through

shared history without any problems.

"We need to look at facts and evidence, instead of appealing to emotional rhetoric or talk of plots and alleged conversions," he advised.

Dr Eu also called on the government, which represents all Malaysians, to uphold and protect freedom of religion in the country.

"Let not Jakim be the only voice purporting to speak on behalf of the government, that has said that it represents Malaysians of different faiths and ethnicities," he added. - September 9, 2013.

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