

**Jakim tightens rules on stage shows, adds gender segregation**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**April 18, 2015**

The Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) has posted new guidelines for artistes and entertainers looking to perform in the country on its website, with strict limitations imposed on their personality, dressing, behaviour and performances.

Jakim is also imposing gender segregation for the audience at concerts and shows while also clamping down on music and lyrics that have elements of "worship", which are considered sacred to believers of other religions.

The rules were released by the department earlier this week after being approved by the 107th National Fatwa Committee Conference in February, and are available in a document linked to Jakim's website. It states that this is the second edition of such rules.

Artistes, Jakim said, must possess "noble and good character" and should not have any criminal record, whether in civil or Shariah cases.

They must also be dressed modestly, without exposing their "aurat" or parts of the body that cannot be exposed according to Islam, and must not wear any clothes that can lead to "exploitation" by the audience.

Dressing, accessories and hairstyles must not resemble that of a different gender of the artiste, Jakim said. Cross-dressing during any performance is also banned.

The religious authority has also ruled that jokes made during performances must be appropriate and cannot lead to "excessive laughter".

Besides that, jokes cannot be made at the expense of a "serious matter" and on "issues that are mournful".

All performances must not go against the sensitivities of any religion and any race, while there also cannot be acts of worship of other beings or humans.

Dance performances, meanwhile, must not cause slander or lust, Jakim said, adding that men and women cannot perform in the same routine.

The music accompanying the performances must inject peace and positivity and cannot evoke negative emotions that are contradictory to Islam, the guidelines said.

The guidelines replace the previous one, which were mainly for preventing elements of vice and idolatry in performances.

"This guideline is to help those involved in the entertainment industry ensure that all events are carried out according to Shariah codes," Jakim said, adding that it also hoped that organisers would inform authorities of any event.

The guidelines are not considered to be law. Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom had said earlier this year that those giving approvals for any concert should always remind the organisers to adhere to Jakim's guidelines.

He had said this in January after a three-minute video uploaded online showed three tudung-clad Muslim fans being hugged and kissed by K-pop artistes B14A at a mini-concert at the Live Centre in Jalan Sultan Ismail, Kuala Lumpur.

The video caused an uproar and religious authorities criticised the action of the girls and band members, saying they were overboard and against Islamic teachings, and had offended Muslim sensitivities. – April 18, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/jakim-tightens-rules-on-stage-shows-adds-gender-segregation>