

**Barisan approved Petaling Jaya church site in 2001, says MBPJ councilor**  
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The site of a planned church in Petaling Jaya, which became the focus of a demonstration today was alienated and gazetted in 2001 as a place of worship during Barisan Nasional (BN) rule, a Petaling Jaya city hall (MBPJ) councilor said today.

MBPJ councilor Cynthia Gabriel (pic) said there was no issue with the building of the four storey Praise Emmanuel Assembly church as all legal requirements had been met by the church.

"The land was gazetted in 2001 during BN's time. So if all legal and procedural requirements had been followed, then MBPJ sees no issue with the building of the church," Cynthia told The Malaysian Insider responding to reports that a Muslim NGO Pertubuhan Sahabat had organised a demonstration this morning to protest the construction of the new church.

The NGO said there are three churches in the vicinity while complaining it was not appropriate in a neighbourhood that counted 70% of its residents as Muslim. The group had demonstrated at the church building site at Jalan PJS 8/9, saying that building a four-storey church in the area would be an insult to the Muslims living there.

He said they were not against the construction of churches but it had to be in suitable locations.

A spokesperson for the NGO, Ishak Maarof, reportedly said that MBPJ had told them that they had called for a public hearing, but maintained that neither his group nor the surau or mosque representatives were informed.

The fact that it is being done quietly, to our mind, is an ill-intentioned agenda against the Muslims here," the news portal reported him as saying.

Ishak also complained that apart from the area being a Muslim area, the location was also unsuitable as the four-storey church can be seen from the Federal Highway and the new LRT extension line.

"I am curious why when there is a planned church, it immediately appears but when there is a surau or mosque to be built, the process is often slow.

"The majority in Selangor are Malays... the Sultan is Malay, the menteri besar is Malay, the state police chief is Malay, the administration is also Malay, what religion are they (the local authorities)?" he was quoted as saying in the Malaysiakini report.

Ishak also hit out at Seri Setia state assemblyman Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad for not being sensitive to the feelings of Muslims living there. – November 2, 2014.

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<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/barisan-approved-petaling-ja-ya-church-site-in-2001-says-mbpj-councilor#sthash.xeYQhgZ8.dpuf>