

## Deputy minister: I was in the dark over non-bumis in Imams

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An emotional Deputy Tourism and Culture Minister Mas Ermieyati Samsudin said today she had been in the dark over the involvement of non-bumiputeras in the company tasked with running the ministry's latest umrah visa management system.

"In fact a day before pitching, I asked my officers again, are there non-bumiputeras in the company or other issues?"

"From the information I received, there was none," Mas Ermieyati told a press conference at the Malaysian Tourism Information Centre in Kuala Lumpur this evening.

The press conference was held within hours after it was announced that the ministry had [scrapped](#) the Integrated Manasik Monitoring System (Imams).

Mas Ermieyati, who was almost in tears, also said it was only a few hours after her press conference yesterday that she was alerted of concerns over the fact that one of Integrated Manasik Monitoring System Sdn Bhd's (Imams Sdn Bhd) top executives is a non-Muslim.

Her press conference yesterday was held to announce the implementation of the system.

Imams was meant to be compulsory for the umrah visa application process, and would have been imposed on all 65 tourism agencies that handle minor pilgrimages to Mecca in Malaysia.

Mas Ermieyati, meanwhile, also confirmed the resignation of Imams Sdn Bhd's non-Muslim chief operating officer from his post.

"Only after my press conference yesterday the matter came to my attention and I feel that this matter should not have happened as we take into the issue of sensitivity.

"Even I can't accept it so I asked my officers to check, and they found out its true that there is a non-Muslim COO, who has resigned," said Mas Ermieyati who did not mention the individual's name.

After confirming the information, Mas Ermieyati said she immediately called Tourism and Culture Minister Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz, and the decision to scrap the system was made shortly after.

"To me the resignation should not be taken into consideration because the damage has been done.

"We take into account this thing have happened and because of that we cancel it, the minister ordered to cancel it," she stressed.

PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution had in a statement earlier today questioned the presence of a non-Muslim COO in Imams Sdn Bhd.

Citing the company's records, he also noted that it employed three Chinese secretaries.

One of the secretaries is MCA Kuantan Youth chief Lee Chai Wah (*photo*), who confirmed this when contacted.

However, he said that his position as secretary in Imams Sdn Bhd is only to help the company to process any documents related to the Companies Act 2016.

"Any company that is registered with Companies Commission of Malaysia must fill in the secretary name. The secretary is only responsible for processing company documents that are related to the Companies Act.

"Other documents such as company financial documents or administrative documents, we do not interfere," said Lee who is also an accountant.

Under the new system, umrah pilgrims would have incurred an overall charge of RM90.10 per pilgrim, comprising RM45 for using Imams, RM40 for a comprehensive umrah takaful insurance scheme, and GST.

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