

'Rally can divide the nation'

Ti: MCA not against right to gather, just the subject matter

By RAHIMY RAHIM
rahimyr@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: MCA is not objecting to PAS' right to hold a rally over proposed amendments to the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965.

It is the subject matter that the party opposes. The party believes the subject matter can cause division in the nation, said MCA religious harmony bureau chairman Datuk Seri Ti Lian Ker.

He was responding to Tourism and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz's statement, who said that PAS has the right to hold a rally as long as it follows the conditions set under the Peaceful Assembly Act.

"Nazri, who as both a lawyer and a lawmaker himself should know better that the proposed tweaks to the Syariah Court Bill which formal-

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Datuk Seri Ti Lian Ker

ly enables implementation of state enactments, will reduce the testimony weightage of non-Muslims and women including Muslim women, thereby contravening Article 8 of the Federal Constitution which ensures equality before the law," he said.

PAS wants to hold the rally to promote its president Datuk Seri

Abdul Hadi Awang's Private Members Bill on amendments to the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act.

The purple-themed rally, called Himpunan RUU355, after the Bahasa Malaysia abbreviation of the Bill, is scheduled for Feb 18.

Ti added that the cautionary tone made by Nazri who warned MCA not to oppose the rally, goes against the spirit of Barisan Nasional's formula of consensus and multiracial goodwill.

"As there are laws against security threats and sedition where any gathering which disrupts the peace and stability of the nation and harmony between races, Nazri should be aware that this rally is grounded on religion and can undermine peaceful co-existence so long cherished and desired by peace-loving Malaysians," he added.

Ti said MCA was wary that the

PAS rally may be warped into an "us-vs-them or Muslims vs non-Muslims furore."

"At no time is MCA against Islam. On the contrary, MCA always respects Islam as the religion of the federation as granted in the Federal Constitution," he said in a statement yesterday.

He also noted that PAS had previously given false assurances before both in the 2008 and 2013 general elections claiming as pushing for a welfare state and its laws will not affect non-Muslims.

"PAS should not pre-empt discussions on the Bill by invoking religious fervour and emotion.

"We do not want detractors to twist the constitutional issues raised by opponents of the Bill as trying to stymie PAS from holding a mega rally in accordance with the procedures of the Peaceful Assembly Act," said Ti.

Police to ban rally if organisers flout law

KUALA LUMPUR: The police will facilitate the proposed Himpunan RUU355 rally, if the organisers follow the rule of law.

"We will follow the Peaceful Assembly Act.

"If they obey all the requirements, the police will facilitate.

"But if they don't follow the Act, we will ban it," said Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar after a handing over of duties ceremony at the Police Training Centre (Pulapol) in a press conference yesterday.

The proposed rally to be held on Feb 18 at Dataran Merdeka by PAS aims to raise support for the RUU355 Bill mooted by its president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, which seeks to increase the penalties in the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act.

On a separate matter, police believe that revenge could have been the reason behind the murder of five Myanmar workers in Sri Serdang.

On Jan 5, five Myanmar workers were killed in a brazen attack as they were walking back from work in the Seri Serdang industrial area.

Four men dressed in black drove up to the group in two cars and attacked the men with machetes at about 10pm.

Two more Myanmar workers were injured in the attack.

Kelantan and firm ink agreement to audit its carbon credits

KOTA BARU: Kelantan has signed a two-year contract with a company to audit carbon credits available in its permanent forest reserves.

Mentri Besar Datuk Ahmad Yakob said the agreement between the state government and Climate Protectors Sdn Bhd yesterday was significant.

He said Climate Protectors will

contribute a sum of RM10mil within 24 months to the state.

Climate Protectors is a company situated in Kuala Lumpur and specialises in renewable & sustainable Energy (such as Solar, Hydro, Bio-Mass and Carbon Credit) with its main focus on Clean and Green Technology.

Ahmad said the firm will be

rewarded with a 30-year concession to work on 360,000ha of permanent forest reserve to audit its carbon emissions.

Under the programme - known as "Reducing Emissions From Deforestation and Forest Degradation" (REDD) - the company will first audit the carbon credits available in the approved areas and then

trade it at the international carbon credit stock exchange.

Ahmad said the state government will take 55% of the profits with 45% going to the company.

"The Kelantan government is always concerned about the forest and this is proof that we will protect the forest for our future generations," he added.