

Ministry, Jakim have no say in MKI's decisions

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Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah chairing the Special Meeting of the Muzakarah Committee of the National Islamic Religious Affairs Council (MKI) in Shah Alam. - BERNAMA PIC

SHAH ALAM: Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of religious affairs or the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) have no say in the decisions made by the National Islamic Religious Affairs Council (MKI).

The Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, who is also MKI chairman, today said any statement regarding the decision made by the MKI Muzakarah Committee must only be made by the chairman to maintain its integrity as well as public confidence.

He said this was to protect decisions made at the national level and fatwas issued at the state level were not influenced by political matters.

His Majesty also said any decision made by the committee should also take into account the rights and interests of the non-Muslims as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

"No other parties including the Religious Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, or the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) can make such a statement.

"This is important to ensure that muzakarah decisions at the national level and fatwas issued at the state level are not influenced by elements of politics.

"Jakim only acts as the secretariat of the MKI Muzakarah Committee," the ruler said at the Special Meeting of the Muzakarah Committee of the MKI here.

He also decreed that any differences of opinion between the muftis and religious scholars must only be debated behind closed doors through a muzakarah (discussion).

The Sultan said disputes among religious scholars should not be made public as it would only damage the credibility of the group.

"So, my advice to the muftis in this hall is to always refrain from religious disputes in the public space, especially if we have already resolved the issues by consensus in a muzakarah.

"One of the issues that really disappointed me was the dispute on the decision of a muzakarah for Tarekat Naqsyabandi al-Aliyyah led by Sheikh Nazim al-Haqqani."

Sultan Sharafuddin said the issue should not have been prolonged because it was already resolved by consensus among the muftis and muzakarah members who attended the meeting in 2020 in Kuantan, Pahang, who decided, after a review, that the tarekat could be practised by his followers.

The Sultan also decreed the MKI Muzakarah Committee to draw up proper ethics of disagreement for its members.

"When there are differences of opinion on religious matters, at least there needs to be Adabul Ikhtilaf, an etiquette of agreeing to disagree," he said.-- BERNAMA