

Date: 6 December 2020

**MCCBCHST STATEMENT
ANY ARBITRARY USE OF LAW TO DEMOLISH A PLACE OF WORSHIP IS
WRONG**

1. The Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism & Taoism is deeply dismayed with the Kedah Menteri Besar Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor who had authorized the demolition of the 50 years old Sri Raja Muniswarar Hindu Temple in Taman Bersatu, Kuala Kedah on December 1, 2020 and gave reason that the temple is built on land where it is not allowed to do so.
2. Given the sensitivity of the situation and the feelings of the devotees to this temple, the Menteri Besar did not attempt to engage in a dialogue for an amicable solution even though the Majlis Bandaraya Alor Setar (MBAS) has been aware of the existence of this temple for some time already. We would like to reiterate that any place of worship (POW) which has been allowed to be built and given tacit approval cannot be illegal, more so as this temple had been built about 50 years ago.
3. The Menteri Besar is also reported to have alluded to the fact that if Muslims have no problem in building their mosque and surau with permission why can't the Hindus do the same? It is a known fact that the building of non-Muslim POW has often faced hurdles and challenges from local authorities unfairly. In the past, these POWs were built to serve the local community that surrounded them and provided a place for worship where people can not only seek tranquility and solace, but also celebrate the joys of life.
4. At a recent meeting between MCCBCHST and the Minister for National Unity YB Datuk Wira Halimah Sadique held on 1 October 2020, we were informed that that she, together with the Minister of Human Resources YB Datuk Seri M. Saravanan, had met with the Menteri Besar of Kedah who had agreed in principle not to demolish any non-Muslim places of worship without first discussing with the 2 Ministers. However, we perturbed that such actions continue to take place.

5. The MCCBCHST hereby registers its strong protest at the insensitive and arbitrary manner in which temple demolitions are being carried out in Kedah. We call on the authorities in the state of Kedah to stop such action immediately and engage in consultation and dialogue with the respective religious heads and the local community before even considering such harsh actions which do not abode well for the peace and harmony in this country. At a time when collectively as Malaysians we are facing the challenges of a pandemic, such arbitrary actions will only cause anger and heartache, more than what we are already having to undergo in these trying times.

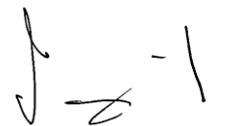
6. Therefore, the MCCBCHST calls upon the Menteri Besar and others in authority to stop such insensitive arbitrary actions and to act justly, in conformity with the Federal Constitution, Rule of Law and Rules of Natural Justice. Let us all come together and be voice for all Malaysians guided by the Federal Constitution and the Rukun Negara.

<End of Statement>

Statement issued and endorsed by:



Archbishop Julian Leow Beng Kim
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