

CHANGES

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS COUNCIL MOOTED

Author says it should include academicians, professionals

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MALAYSIA needs to set up a National Religious Advisory Council to advise Islamic bodies, as part of its reformation efforts.

Dr Mohd Faizal Musa, better known as Faisal Tehrani, who met the Council of Eminent Persons yesterday, said the advisory council he mooted should comprise academicians and professionals.

Faisal, an author, said he also suggested that the proposed council include social activists and anthropologists.

A fellow researcher at (Institut Alam dan Tamadun Melayu) of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Faisal previously saw seven of his books banned by the previous government.

He said he had raised this matter with the council.

"The meeting with the council members was positive and I have suggested a few changes, including the setting up of the advisory council," he said after a meeting at Menara Ilham here.

He said this council would "help improve the position of the Islamic Development Department (Jakim)".

Perlis Mufti Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin, in his meeting with the council, asked that the government implement an overall concept of Islam,



Dr Mohd Faizal Musa (centre), better known as Faisal Tehrani, speaking at Menara Ilham in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY SYARAFIQ ABD SAMAD

which would be in line with the aspirations of the new Malaysia.

He said this was among the recommendations he made for the advancement of the country.

"We discussed many things, such as having a fair approach towards Islam, not only for Muslims but also non Muslims."

He said he shared his views on the state of affairs with regard to Islam.

Asri said the council asked his views on

several issues, including fatwa, how Perlis viewed issues relating to child custody, as well as out of wedlock babies given "bin or binti Abdullah".

He said Jakim's role was discussed.

"Any decisions would be the government's call. I just gave my views."

The council met mufti from several states yesterday to get their views on matters related to Islamic organisations and institutions to boost national unity.