

Cianjur government instructs mosques to preach on dangers of LGBT, HIV/AIDS

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Jakarta — The Cianjur regency government has asked all regency mosques to present sermons on the dangers of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) and HIV/AIDS at Friday prayers this October 19.

The instruction by the regency government to all sub-district heads was contained in Cianjur Regency Circular Number 400/5368/Kesra on Presenting Friday Sermons on LGBT which was received by CNN Indonesia.

Referring to the circular, the government said that there are a significant number of LGBT people in Cianjur regency based on a report by the Cianjur Aids Commission (KPA).

Because of this, the regency government is asking that sermons on the dangers of LGBT and HIV/AIDS be presented at Friday prayers this week. "And disseminate this to all local village/ward chiefs", read a section of the circular.

Aside from the instruction itself, attached to the circular is six pages of sermon text titled "The Dangers of LGBT, Sodomy and Abuse in Religious Life, the Nation and the State from the Perspective of Islamic Law".

Cianjur regency government public relations head Gagan Rusganda has confirmed the circular. "That's right. The circular was issued by the Cianjur regency government as an endeavor to address the spread of LGBT in our regency", said Rusganda when sought for confirmation on Wednesday October 17.

According to Rusganda, only regency mosques that can accommodate large numbers of worshipers are obliged to give sermons on the dangers of LGBT.

Rusganda claimed that the Cianjur regency government had coordinated with several institutions in drafting the circular. The text of the sermon distributed to mosque managers, he said, was drafted by a team comprising members of the Cianjur regency government, the Cianjur Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) and representatives from the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

"Of course the negative impact of LGBT is our concern and the concern of communities in our region so that [the number of LGBT] does not continue to grow and develop", he said.

The regency government and the public are anxious about the growth in the number of LGBT people, particularly Men Having Sex with Men (Lelaki Seks dengan Lelaki, LSL) in Cianjur regency. He claimed that the presence of LGBT people has been reported in almost all parts of the regency.

As of July this year, Rusganda claims that 3,452 LSL people were reported in Cianjur regency. This has occurred in concert with findings on HIV/AIDS sufferers, which reached 916 people as of last

September.

“This data has been found and recorded, of course there will be more who are not yet recorded”, he said. (bmw/arh)

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