

Muslims Charge Katy Perry With Blasphemy, Launch Petition Against New Video

Nearly 60,000 people have signed a petition demanding that YouTube take down a **Katy Perry** video they say is **blasphemous** and offensive to Muslims.

About 75 seconds into the video for the song "Dark Horse," a Cleopatra-like Perry shoots a laser at a man dressed as a pharaoh but also wearing a pendant that says "Allah" in Arabic. Both the man and the Allah pendant disintegrate.

"**Blasphemy** is clearly conveyed in the video," reads the petition, started by 22-year-old Shazad Iqbal of Bradford, England, who suggests Perry sets herself up as an enemy of God by shooting the man with the Allah necklace. "We hope YouTube will remove the video."

But some Muslims said the flap was much ado about nothing.

Zeyna Ahmed of Easton, Pa., a mother of four, including two teenage daughters who love Perry, never noticed the Allah pendant in the video.

"Muslims need to stop making a big deal about unimportant things," Ahmed said. "With all the death and destruction in this world, especially in Muslim countries, Katy Perry's video should be the last thing on our minds."

The petition has attracted signatories from every continent, and while almost all are Muslims, a few have described themselves as Christians.

Some anti-Islamic bloggers pointed to the controversy as evidence that Muslims don't believe in free speech and are intolerant. But Asma Afsaruddin, chair of the department of

Near Eastern languages and cultures at Indiana University, said the number of Muslims who signed the petition was much less important than those who didn't sign.

"Sixty thousand is a drop in the bucket compared to the 1.5 billion Muslims who have not signed, and most of whom probably don't care," said Afsaruddin. "For most Muslims, it's not something to be concerned about."