

**CHRISTIAN FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA
(PERSEKUTUAN KRISTIAN MALAYSIA)**

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CFM MEDIA STATEMENT

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**JAIS RAID VIOLATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT
AND CABINET'S 10-POINTS SOLUTION**

The Christian Federation of Malaysia strongly condemns the raid conducted by officers from the Selangor State Islamic Department (JAIS), accompanied by the police, on the premises of the Bible Society of Malaysia (BSM) on Thursday afternoon 2 January 2014.

They seized 320 copies of the Al-Kitab, the Bible in Bahasa Malaysia, and 10 copies of the Bup Kudus, the Bible in the Iban language. The President of BSM and the Office Manager were also arrested during the raid and brought to a nearby police station to have their statements recorded. Both were subsequently released on police bail but have been told to make themselves available to be interviewed by JAIS.

The raid, the seizure of copies of our sacred Scriptures and the arrest of two of BSM's officers are clear violations of our constitutionally-mandated right to freedom of religion, as set out in Article 11 of the Federal Constitution.

The unwarranted actions on the part of JAIS, aided and abetted by the police, are in absolute breach of the Cabinet's 10-points solution announced in April 2011 which stated that Christians can import, print and distribute the Al-Kitab under certain conditions, all of which have been complied with by BSM.

We call upon the Prime Minister and members of the Cabinet to uphold the word and commitment of the Federal Government to ensure that the rights of the Christian community under the Federal Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, are not violated and trampled upon by state-level religious officers with the complicity of the Federal police.

This unconscionable conduct on the part of JAIS and the Federal police is not just an authoritarian abuse of power and an act of harassment against Christians in Malaysia. It is also a blatant and aggressive attack on the moral and multi-cultural fabric of our society which values inter-communal harmony and utmost respect for the sanctity of each other's religious beliefs and books.

To allow one religion to be able to monitor and regulate how another religion is to be practiced is a distasteful recipe for disaster, and a contradiction of the moderation of which the Prime Minister speaks so frequently abroad.

JAIS, or for that matter any Muslim religious body or department, must not have any authority over another religion. It is as simple as that. Otherwise, the constitutional protection of freedom of religion will mean absolutely nothing.

We are disturbed by the fact that the actions by JAIS and the police yesterday are but the latest episode in a continuing saga of repeated violations of the freedom of religion of the non-Muslim community in Malaysia.

We are also deeply concerned and disturbed by the numerous reports of threats that have been made in both mainstream and alternative media that indicate protests and demonstrations will be organised outside churches in Selangor.

We welcome the police statements warning Umno Selangor that their protests would contravene the Peaceful Assembly Act and that the police in Klang would be present to ensure the safety and security of church members and the sanctity of the church as a place of worship.

We call upon the police and the relevant authorities to do their sworn duty to protect and defend the rights of the Christian minority in Malaysia and to ensure that the sanctity of our places of worship and the safety of our members are not in any way violated. It is incumbent on the police and the relevant authorities to ensure that our places of worship are not desecrated or defiled and our worship services not disturbed by these protestors and their threatened actions.

Finally, we call upon all Christians to be vigilant both in standing up for their constitutional rights and in prayer, and to remain calm in the midst of these trying times. We call on Almighty God for good sense and wisdom to ultimately prevail in this beloved land of ours.



Rev. Dr. Eu Hong Seng,
Chairman and the Executive Committee,
Christian Federation of Malaysia