

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

Address: 10, Jalan 11/9 Sec. 11, 46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Telephone: (03) 7957 1278, (03) 7957 1463, Fax: (03) 7957 1457

Email: cfmsia@yahoo.co.uk

**CFM media statement on 15,000 Bahasa Malaysia Bibles held by authorities
CFM CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF 15,000 BIBLES**

The Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) calls for the immediate release of the 15,000 Bibles in Bahasa Malaysia currently being withheld by the authorities.

To withhold the use of the Bahasa Malaysia Bibles is an infringement of Article 11 of the Federal Constitution which gives every Malaysian the right to profess his/ her faith as well as to practice it.

This constitutional right is rendered illusory if Christians in Malaysia are denied access to Bibles in a language with which they are familiar.

This action of withholding the Bahasa Malaysia Bibles deprives Christians in Sabah, Sarawak, and in Semenanjung, a large majority of whom use Bahasa Malaysia, the right to use the Holy Scriptures in Bahasa Malaysia, to practice and profess their faith and, to nourish themselves spiritually.

It is baseless to withhold the Bibles in Bahasa Malaysia on the ground that they are "prejudicial to public order". Bibles in Bahasa Malaysia have been used since before the independence of our country and has never been the cause of any public disorder.

Since the 1970s and in consonance with the government's policies in education and the national language, Christians in Malaysia have received their education in Bahasa Malaysia. To deny the same Christians in Malaysia the right to read and study the Bible in Bahasa Malaysia is thus ridiculous and offensive. In fact, it is this action by the authorities themselves which is an affront to good public order.

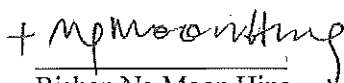
We call on the relevant government officials who have neither the authority nor the right to act in this unconscionable manner to explain their action to the church leaders and to the public.

Church leaders and the Executive Committee of the CFM in "An Affirmation to the Churches in Malaysia" (6-8 Sept 1989, the Kuching consultation) and then later in "A Declaration to Churches in Malaysia" (30 January 2008) have stood on their commitment to Bahasa Malaysia as our national language and have used and continue to use Bahasa Malaysia in the life and witness of our Churches and Christian organizations.

The government and CFM have exchanged letters on this matter previously and we have a written agreement in December 2005 that Bahasa Malaysia Bibles can be distributed so long as the symbol of the cross and the words "A Christian publication" are printed on the front page.

We call on the government to walk the talk of its Malaysia policy and vision and not to curtail or impose conditions on the freedom of citizens to worship, pray and read the Holy Scriptures in Bahasa Malaysia. How can the first pillar of the Rukunegara i.e. Belief In God, be made a living reality in the lives of Malaysians if the government imposes restrictions and conditions on the constitutional and fundamental right of citizens to freedom of religion?

We ask that the relevant authorities resolve this matter promptly and release these Bibles for the use of Christians without any further delay or excuse.



Bishop Ng Moon Hing,
Chairman and the Executive Committee,
The Christian Federation of Malaysia

Dated : 4 Nov 2009