

Abim: PM must state stand on BM Bible
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The Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (Abim) today demanded that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak clear the air over his alleged promise that the Malay-language Bible will not be banned.

Abim secretary-general Mohamad Raimi Rahim said the alleged promise, which was claimed by the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM), is a serious matter as it would indicate the government's position on the issue.

"In this context, CFM's claim paints the picture that the government has agreed to the distribution of the Malay-language Bible in this country, when it is not officially gazetted by the government," he said in a statement.

Yesterday, CFM chairperson Bishop Ng Moon Hing claimed that Najib had promised the Malay-language Bible, or Al-Kitab, would be allowed to be distributed freely, at least in Sabah and Sarawak.

The federation accused the authorities of ignoring Najib's alleged promise, in not releasing 30,000 copies of the holy book which were confiscated on two separate occasions at Port Klang and the Port of Kuching in 2009 and 2010.

'Discuss behind closed doors'

Raimi said it is important for Najib to make his position on the matter clear, to avoid any confusion and misunderstandings that could affect the racial harmony that has been a goal of the government.

He said Abim is of the view that freedom to practice religion should not overstep Islam's position as the state religion, and that all enactments that control the spread of other religions among Muslims should be respected.

"Abim considers these provisions, outlined by the law, form the core of the harmony and stability in the country's multi-racial and multi-religious society.

"Abim also urges all parties not to give excessive pressure to the point that it oversteps any authority in the country when pushing for their demands, especially on sensitive issues such as this.

"Any confusion or conflict should be settled through dialogue and closed door discussions between the country's religious leaders," Raimi said.