

**Allah ban affects all Bahasa Malaysia Christian publications, says religious group**  
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**By TRINNA LEONG**

Today's court ruling which banned the use of the word Allah in the Catholic weekly, Herald, has a far-reaching implication as it affects all Christian publications printed in Bahasa Malaysia, said the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM).

The CFM said in a statement that the Court of Appeal, by stating "that the name Allah was not an integral part of the Christian faith and practice", had totally ignored the position of Bumiputera and Orang Asli Christians who constitute 60% of the Christian population in Malaysia. And they are all Bahasa Malaysia-speaking Malaysians.

"The Bahasa Malaysia-speaking Christians have been using the word Allah, before and after the independence of Malaya and the formation of Malaysia," said CFM chairman Reverend Dr Eu Hong Seng in the statement.

Dr Eu expressed disappointment with the ruling, stating the judges' decision would "undermine the unity of Malaysians".

He also said that by playing up the Allah issue, various quarters had only fuelled misunderstandings, distrust and brokenness between Muslims and Christians in the country.

"It now appears that a minority religion can only be practised to the extent that it does not upset the peace and harmony of the majority religion," he said.

Earlier today, a three-man Court of Appeal bench led by Datuk Seri Mohamed Apandi Ali had allowed Putrajaya's appeal and ruled that the word Allah was banned from the Bahasa Malaysia section of Herald, a Catholic weekly published by the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur.

"It is our common finding that the name Allah was not an integral part of the Christian faith and practice," Apandi said.

"Such usage, if allowed, will inevitably cause confusion within the community," he added.

The judge, who read a summary judgment, said the Home Minister had therefore acted within his powers to disallow the Catholic weekly Herald from using the word Allah in its Bahasa Malaysia section.

"Our common finding is that the use of Allah is not an integral part of the Christian faith, so we find no justification for why they insist on using the name or word in their publication," Apandi told the court. - October 14, 2013.

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