

Respect A-G's decision in Bible-seizure row, says Najib
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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has weighed in on the Bible-seizure row and called on all parties to respect the Attorney-General's (A-G) decision not to charge of the Bible Society of Malaysia (BSM).

He also urged the Selangor Islamic Religious Council (Mais) to discuss with the A-G if it feels that the decision should be reviewed.

In a statement, Najib said the solution to the issue should be based on the provisions and spirit of the country's constitution and law, so that it would be accepted by society.

"And then all quarters must respect the decision made," he added. Bernama quoted the prime minister as saying that the Selangor government, Mais and Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais) which had full responsibility over the management and administration of Islamic affairs in the state, should decide whether to return the seized Bibles (to BSM) or otherwise.

"As enshrined in Article 3(1) of the Federal Constitution, Islam is the official religion of the federation and other religions can also be practised in this country.

"The Federal Constitution also safeguards the sanctity of Islam and Muslims from being influenced by the doctrines and teachings of other religions," he said.

Najib said Article 11(4) of the Federal Constitution also gave the federal government the power to control and prevent the preaching of doctrines and other religions to Muslims in the Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur, Labuan and Putrajaya, and the same power to the state governments.

Last week, Attorney-General Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail had declared the case closed and ordered Jais to facilitate the return of the 321 holy books which were seized from the BSM premises in Damansara Jaya on January 2.

However, two days later, Mais called on the authorities to take action against BSM, saying that it did not agree with Gani's decision to close the case, and claimed his decision would cause confusion among Muslims.

Mais also said that the seized Bibles should not be returned to BSM and that it believed there was a case against BSM under the Selangor Enactment 1988.

It further stated that the Selangor government had no authority to instruct Jais to return the seized holy books.

Mais chairman Datuk Mohamad Adzib Mohd Isa had also said that both Mais and Jais had a responsibility to protect the sanctity of Islam, especially in Selangor.

"We are very concerned at any attempt to tarnish the sanctity of the religion by misusing Quranic terms for names.

"This is especially for any move we believe could be used for proselytisation," he added. – June 17, 2014.

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