

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

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

Telephone: (03) 7957 1278, (03) 7957 146, Fax: (03) 7957 1457

Email: cfmsia@yahoo.co.uk

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Dear Christian leaders,

Allah-word & the Alkitab : Fact Sheet (revised)

This revised fact sheet is presented for the information of Christian church leaders and Christians in Malaysia with regards the use of the word “Allah” and the Alkitab. We hope that this short non-exhaustive chronology will be helpful to all when asked by their friends to give an explanation of the Christian use of the term “Allah” and the historical publication of the Alkitab from its earliest beginnings to the present day.

1629	A. C. Ruyl translated the Gospel / Injil of Matthew into Bahasa Melayu. <i>‘Allah’ was used in the following example: “maka angkou memerin’ja nama Emanuel artin’ja Allahu (the Greek word THEOS) serta segala kita” (Matt. 1:23).</i> The translations that followed also retained the word “Allah” among the following translations:
1631	Dictionarivm : Malaico-Latinvm = Latino-Malaicvm. Rome. n Alla , vel alla-te-alla Deus
1646	Van Hasel’s translation : Luke and John (surviving copies in the libraries of the University of Amsterdam, Netherlands and the University of Cambridge, UK.
1733	Translation of the Book of Genesis by M. Leijdecker <i>“Pada mulanja dedjadikanlah Allah akan swarga dan dunja.” (Gen. 1:1).</i> <i>This is the first complete Malay Bible.</i>
1879	Translation of the Book of Isaiah by H. C. Klinkert <i>“Bahwa-sanja Allah djoega salamatkoe.” (Isaiah 12:2).</i> <i>This is the second complete Malay Bible.</i>
1890	Kebaktian Sa’hari Harian “Ia Elkhadir dan kakal Allah ”
1895	Christian Doctrine : Pengajaran Mesehi – Terpendek “Saval : Siapa sudah jadikan kami? Jawab : Allah Taala Saval : Brapa ada Allah? Jawab : Satu sahja, dan tida boleh ada lebeh sari satu Allah”

<p>1915</p> <p>1938</p> <p>1981</p> <p>1982</p> <p>1983</p> <p>1985/ 1989</p>	<p>Kitab Sembahyang Dalam Greja (Portions of the Book of Common Prayer in the Malay Language) published by SPCK London.</p> <p>Translation of the Gospel / Injil of John. <i>“Maka pada awal pertama adalah Firman, dan Firman itu bersama-sama dengan Allah.” (John 1:1).</i></p> <p>The Alkitab banned – Absolutely by order under the Internal Security (Prohibition of Publications) (No. 3) Order made 2nd December 1981 (KHEDN : 0 59/3/9/Jld 4; PN (PU2) 24 pt. 11).</p> <p><u>“The printing, publication, sale, issue, circulation or possession of the publication which is described in the Schedule and which is prejudicial to the national interest and security of the Federation and is prohibited absolutely throughout Malaysia.”</u></p> <p>The Alkitab banned by order under the Internal Security (Prohibition of Publications) (No. 4) Order made 22nd March 1982 (KHEDN: 0. 59/3/9/A; PN (PU2) 24 Pt. II).</p> <p><i>“The printing, publication, sale, issue, circulation or possession of the publication which is described in the Schedule and which is <u>prejudicial to the national interest and security of the Federation and is prohibited</u>, subject to the condition that this prohibition shall not apply to the possession or use in Churches of such publication by persons, professing the Christian religion, throughout Malaysia.”</i></p> <p>Perintah Keselamatan Dalam Negeri (Tegahan mengenai penerbitan) (No. 3) Order made 4th May 1983</p> <p><i>“Perjanjian Baru” ditegah dan tertakluk pada syarat bahawa tegahan ini tidak dikenakan kepada pemilik dan penggunaan suratan itu di dalam gereja oleh Kristian diseluruh Malaysia dengan alasan “memudarat kepada kepentingan negara dan keselamatan Persekutuan.” (KHEDN: O. 59/3/9/A; PN (PU2) 24 Pt. II)</i></p> <p>Heads of Malaysian Churches met in Kuala Lumpur (1985) and then in Kuching (1989) and decided unanimously to keep the name “Allah” and the Bible Society of Malaysia honoured this decision when it published the revised Malay Bible, the Alkitab Berita Baik (1996). See the Kuching Declaration entitled “An Affirmation to the Churches in Malaysia” (September 1989) which was revised and re-issued as “A Declaration To the Churches in Malaysia (30th January 2008).</p>
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1986	<p>Circular letter to all Christian publishers from the publication control division of the Kementerian Dalam Negeri stating 4 words which are not allowed to be used in Christian publications : Allah, Kaabah, Baitullah and Solat. The aim of this prohibition is for public order and to prevent any misunderstanding between Muslims and Christians. (Letter KDN : S.59/3/9/A Klt. 2 – (17) and dated 5 December 1986).</p>
1988	<p>Selangor Enactment No. 1 of 1988 aka Non-Islamic Religions (Control of Propagation Amongst Muslims) Enactment, 1988 in Schedule 1 (Section 9) gives list of 25 words not to be used pertaining to a non-Islamic religion. Among the words are : Allah, Firman Allah, Ibadah, Kaaba, Wahyu, Mubaligh, Rasul, Iman, Salat, Imam, and Nabi.</p> <p>Other states with similar enactments are : Terengganu (1980), Kelantan, Perlis, Kedah, Perak, Negri Sembilan, Melaka and Johor.</p>
1992	<p>Enakmen Pentadbiran Undang-Undang Islam 1992 (Enakmen no.13, 1992) - Sabah fatwa prohibits use of 32 words by non-Muslims in their teaching or the advancement of their teaching. Among the 32 words are : Allah, Firman Allah, Ibadah, Wahyu, Mubaligh, Iman, Rasul, Solat, Imam, Nabi, and Injil. Published in Sabah State Government Gazette of 1 June 2003.</p>
1998	<p>The first letter to Herald from KDN – an admonition – not to use the word ALLAH.</p>
2002	<p>The second letter to Herald – a show-cause letter – to be answered within 14 days. Subsequently through appeal and to representation to the Cabinet Herald was granted the use of the word ALLAH in its publication.</p>
2005	<p>Letter from Kementerian Keselamatan Dalam Negeri allows Christian publications to be distributed on condition that the front page has a “cross” with the words “Penerbitan Kristian” (“A Christian Publication). The aim of the conditions was stated that it was to prevent confusion among Muslims in Malaysia. Letter dated 22 December 2005.</p>
2006	<p>Letter from Kementerian Keselamatan Dalam Negeri allows for the publication of Bible in Bahasa Melayu edition in Malaysia with the conditions that it is chopped with the “cross” and the words “Untuk Penganut Beragama Kristian” and that the BM Bible is allowed to be sold only in Christian premises or shops. The aim of the decision was stated as to prevent the confusion of Muslims in Malaysian society. Letter dated 11 May 2006.</p>
2006	<p>Home Ministry letters to the Herald :</p> <p>The third letter – a reprimand.</p> <p>The fourth letter – a warning (in January)</p> <p>The fifth letter – another warning (in February)</p>
2006	<p>Home Minister sets condition against the use of the word “Allah” on the Catholic weekly “Herald” in renewing their publication licence. The Herald seeks redress through the courts against the power of the Home Minister to set conditions on the use of the “Allah” word.</p>

2007	The sixth letter to Herald – a show-cause letter. Herald files A Writ of Summons and Statement of Claim on 5 Dec 2007. An Application for Judicial review on the above condition cited above.
2007 2008	Customs officers and Home Ministry officials detain the Alkitab at ports of entry and confiscate publications, Sunday School children's books and CDs, from owners. This led to Sidang Injil Borneo (in Dec 2007) and Jill Ireland binti Lawrence Bill (in July 2008) initiating judicial review against the power of the Home Minister.
2008	An Application for Judicial Review for Herald 2009 permit condition was filed.
2009	Akta Keselamatan Dalam Negeri (1960) (Larangan Penggunaan Perkataan Tertentu Pada Dokumen dan Penerbitan) 2009. Dated 16 Feb 2009.
Dec 2009	Herald wins case against the power of the Home Minister to set conditions on the use of the word "Allah" in the Herald publication. Judgment handed down on 31 Dec 2009. Government to appeal the High Court decision.

We pray that the above non-exhaustive chronological outline presentation will be helpful to Christians in understanding the beginnings of the use of the term "Allah", the publication of the Alkitab from earliest times, the ban on the Alkitab and the ban on the use of the "Allah" word in the Herald and all Christian publications.

Yours sincerely,



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