



Majlis Perundingan Malaysia Agama Buddha, Kristian, Hindu, Sikh dan Tao

Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism
Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism

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The Verdict on the word “Allah” Whose Loss, Whose Gain?

Shocking, disappointing and unbelievable. The verdict by the Appellate Court on 14th October 2013 comes as a great disappointment to the people of different faiths who contribute their goodwill and support for the maintenance of peace and harmony in this land that belongs to all Malaysians. The Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) is baffled by the verdict. The learned judges seemingly, did not take into account the High Court’s rationale for allowing the usage of the word “Allah” by the Catholic weekly publication that is only available in Catholic Churches. Muslims do not have access to it unless they intentionally want to read the Herald like any other newspaper. So, the issue of creating confusion in the minds of Muslims is far-fetched and spurious. The decision of the Appellate Court appears to have discarded logic, discarded points of law, and resorted to defending a nebulous concept of confusion and stability. It conveniently forgot the provisions of religious freedom in Article 3 of the Federal Constitution.

While MCCBCHST condoles with the Christian component and its people for this tragic decision, it nevertheless wishes to highlight some outcomes that could emerge from this sad episode.

In one fell-swoop this disappointing decision has decisively widened the gap between Muslims and members of other faiths. This stark division between these two religious groups puts paid the much touted and trumpeted 1Malaysia slogan, promoted so vigorously have come to naught. What peace and harmony there was in the past has now been shattered by this one decision to placate the public interest of a “group” but not the objective “public”. Thus the latest globe trotting Prime Minister’s attempt to advertise global peace, moderation and inclusiveness has become an expensive exercise in futility. This stunning verdict has damaged the image of the Prime Minister and with him, Malaysia. What a cost to pay for pandering to a minority extremist group which claims to know God as Allah as only they do. The others who have a longer history of revealed divine experience of “God as Allah” are now deviants, in error, only in this Muslim nation among

many others in the world. It is regretful that we have become a laughing stock to the entire world by this unwarranted verdict.

Be that as it may in this multi-faithed Malaysia, this decision, far from humiliating the Christians in both East and Peninsular Malaysia, only serves to enhance, strengthen and live out their faith with greater vigour and pride. If the political intent of this unfavourable verdict was to subjugate the minority religions to bow to legal pressure then the powers-that-be have misread the peoples love for their respective religious way of life. The 2.6 million Christians will not be cowed into submission. Instead, they will use this disappointment as a catalyst to strengthen their faith and good work.

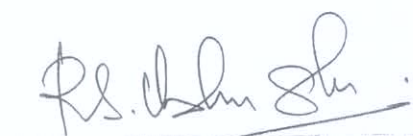
Therefore MCCBCHST urges the Government to value the collective goodwill and intelligence of the people in the promotion of peace, harmony and stability. Having recourse to political expediency to boost supremacy and power and using the courts to trump everything, including religious practices of minority religions, will not help in the promotion of 1Malaysia or the inclusiveness of all its citizens/races/religions that it hopes, will happen any soon. We hope that all religions are accepted in sincerity and respected fully as per the Federal Constitution. Lip service will not do as we have experienced with disappointment in the past. Let this verdict of the Appellate Court not further divide the nation and bring to disrepute the image of the Government and its multi-religious population.



Sardar Jagir Singh
President
MCCBCHST



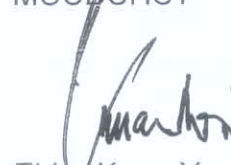
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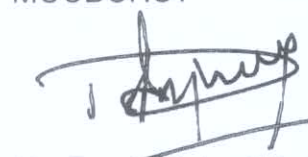
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