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“United to build and to be a Blessing”

**PRESS STATEMENT
CONFISCATING OF CHRISTIAN LITERATURE**

The Council of Churches strongly deplores the action of the state enforcement officials of the Publications and Al-Quran Texts Control Department under the Internal Security Ministry who recently confiscated English language Christian children’s books said to contain offensive caricatures of prophets from several bookshops in three states; Johor Baru, Negeri Sembilan and Perak.

Such officials have no right and have overstepped their bounds by confiscating Christian literature.

It has been stated that illustrations of prophets depicted in the children’s books are offensive to the sensitivities of Muslims.

In the first place, the Christian children’s books are not meant for Muslims, so how can it be offensive to them?

Second, the illustrations contained in whatever form in such books depict biblical characters of spiritual significance for Christians.

By such an action the officials have offended the sensitivities of Christians because their publications and depictions of their biblical personalities have now become targets of unscrupulous Muslim officials bent on curtailing religious freedom in the country.

The Council of Churches strongly urges the Prime Minister and his Cabinet to take immediate action to put a stop to such actions by the said Ministry.

If such actions continue, it will undermine democracy and tarnish the good relations between the different religious communities in the country.

Immediate steps should be taken to amend administrative rules and regulations especially in the Internal Security Ministry that give a freehand to enforcement officials to act at their whim and fancies.

Rev. Dr. Hermen Shastri,
General Secretary
Council of Churches of Malaysia
17th January 2008.