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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA

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PRESS STATEMENT

Greater tolerance and respect are needed in handling religious issues

The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (the Commission) views seriously and with great concern the action by the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais) and the police in raiding the premises of the Bible Society of Malaysia (BSM), the manner in which the raid was reportedly conducted, as well as the arrest of BSM's president Lee Min Choon, and manager Sinclair Wong on 2 January 2014.

The Commission deems it of utmost importance that the authorities in carrying out their duties, exercise their powers and discretion in accordance with the law as well as in line with the principles of the rights to a fair trial and equal protection of the law as enshrined in the Federal Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

The Commission also calls on the authorities to respect and ensure the right of all citizens to the freedom of religion as guaranteed under Article 11 of the Federal Constitution and Article 18 of the UDHR, including the right of all communities to freely profess and practise their religions.

Recognising that Malaysia is a culturally and religiously diverse country, the Commission sees the important need for Malaysians at all levels of society to demonstrate a greater degree of religious tolerance and respect in handling religious and cultural issues.

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"HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL"

Datuk Dr Khaw Lake Tee

Vice Chairman

The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

4 January 2014