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Sabbaruddin-Media

GREATEST TREASON TO SELL NEGATIVE INFO ABOUT COUNTRY

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 16 (Bernama) -- Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said today selling negative and untrue information about Malaysia to foreign media is the greatest treason to the country.

"If there's such a person I think he's the greatest traitor," he told reporters after a cultural presentation preview for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit to be held here in November.

Sabbaruddin, who is also Umno secretary-general, said this when asked to comment on the statement by Special Functions Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin yesterday. Daim had said that such action had frustrated government's efforts to fight the economic downturn.

The preview on the presentation titled "When River Meets" and lasting about 70 minutes was held at the DBKL Auditorium here. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali were also present.

Sabbaruddin said he did not know who Daim was referring to but he agreed that it was a bad one.

To a question, he said local media should counter negative reports about the country by telling the world what was actually happening in the country.

"If foreign tourists believe in such negative reports, it's the responsibility of the local media to convince them otherwise," he said.

Sabbaruddin also took to task an international rating agency for downgrading Malaysia's credit worthiness and grouping it together with other countries whose economy was far less developed than Malaysia's.

The move had frustrated government's plan to raise funds through issue of bonds overseas, he said.

He said the Malaysian government had never made enemies with any party and in fact encouraged foreign investors to invest in the country.

"We have never dreamt of wanting to nationalise any interest owned by foreign investors in the country," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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