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Sabbaruddin-Australia

SABBARUDDIN TO MEET AUSSIE ENVOY OVER HOLIDAY TRIP CANCELLATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 3 (Bernama) -- Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Sabbaruddin Chik will meet Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia Robert Cotten over the cancellation of a holiday trip by a group of Australian tourists owing to bad press on Malaysia by the foreign media.

He said he would enlighten Cotten on the actual situation in Malaysia.

Situation in Malaysia is under control and safe for foreigners to visit, he told reporters when asked to comment on reports that 70 Australian tourists cancelled their hotel bookings recently following adverse reports on Malaysia.

The tourists, scheduled to arrive in Malaysia next year, had made package bookings for a three-day stay in a leading hotel here and another three days in Sabah, he said .

Earlier, he presented a RM50,000 sponsorship cheque to Alexander Yoong, Malaysia's Formula Three racer, on behalf of the Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board (Tourism Malaysia).

Sabbaruddin said the foreign media should not cash in on the expulsion of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from the government and Umno to portray Malaysia in a bad light.

He said they should not misconstrue the real situation in Malaysia.

"Owing to their baseless and distorted reports, some foreign tourists feel Malaysia is in a war-torn zone and was scared to come here to spend their holidays," he said.

Sabbaruddin, who is also Umno secretary-general, said the working paper on the proposed amendments to the party constitution was ready to be tabled at the Dec 13 Special Umno General Assembly convened to discuss and approve the amendments.

Besides determining an appropriate time frame to enable a party member to vie for positions, the assembly would also debate on the age limit for party membership and the mode of campaigning for party positions, he said.

"We do not want overzealous campaigning to the extent of ignoring the party constitution. We will limit it from going overboard," he said.

He said Umno does not stop a candidate vying for party posts from campaigning but the party's constitution must be respected.

A total of 2,017 delegates would attend the one-day assembly scheduled to be opened by Prime Minister and Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

-- BERNAMA

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