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Khalil-Media

BRIEFING FOR FOREIGN MEDIA TO BE A REGULAR AFFAIR, SAYS MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, June 3 (Bernama) -- The Information Ministry will meet foreign media representatives in the country from time to time to brief them on government policies and current developments and to correct any misconceptions.

Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said in view that the foreign correspondents were always busy with their work, efforts would be made to designate a place for the meeting.

"We are satisfied because we also need cooperation (of the foreign media)," he told reporters after meeting foreign media representatives here today.

The meeting was attended by 30 representatives of 13 foreign news agencies in the country. The first such meeting was held at the end of last year.

Khalil said efforts were being made to set up a foreign correspondents' club here.

Khalil said he stressed the need for them to make accurate reports reflecting the actual situation in the country.

"This meeting can help them form opinions on developments connected to the actual political situation (in the country). Finally, they showed interest to know more about the economic situation and our policies in overcoming the problems following the Iraq war and SARS outbreak," he said.

Khalil said it was not that the government was unhappy with the foreign media but it felt that there was room for improvement in the reports they filed.

"Because sometimes they were not very accurate and some facts seemed to have been deliberately misrepresented. This we will rectify, and we will study this matter," he said.

At the briefing, Khalil answered questions on international issues involving Malaysian interests, preparations for the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit here in October, the Umno general assembly later this month, economy, security and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's retirement in October.

A representative from the Royal Malaysia Police and another from the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) were present to give clarifications on security matters and the economic stimulus package that was unveiled recently.

On the corporatisation of RTM scheduled for later this month, Khalil said in principle there had been no changes to the proposal.

"There are no changes in terms of policy ... but exactly when we want to implement it is still being worked out," he said.

The ministry was in the midst of resolving several matters related to central agencies before implementing it, he said.

Khalil said a statement would be made on the status of the corporatisation.

-- BERNAMA

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