

22 SEP 2003

RTM-Apology

RTM APOLOGISES OVER FAILURE TO CARRY POWER-SHARING EVENT LIVE

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 22 (Bernama) -- Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM) today apologised over its failure to carry live the Barisan Nasional 50th power sharing anniversary celebrations from the Stadium Merdeka on Saturday.

The Broadcasting Department Secretariat in a statement said RTM's failure to provide the live coverage was due to a technical fault which could not be avoided.

"However on that day, Radio One had live coverage from time to time throughout the duration of the celebrations."

The event was also covered in the news bulletins over TV1 and TV2 at 3pm, 4pm, 6pm and 8pm, the statement said.

TV1 also aired in full at 9pm the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the function, it said.

The statement also said that RTM had widely promoted the event and the history of the power sharing concept before and after independence even before the actual date of the celebrations.

According to news reports Barisan Nasional Secretary-General Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat had blasted RTM for its failure to provide the live coverage despite earlier assurances it would do so.

The former Information Minister said the BN Secretariat had provided all the necessary equipment and facilities for the live coverage.

Moreover this had been agreed to at the meeting of the celebrations central organising committee which included Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Mohamed said.

Khalil is the Chairman of the Publicity Sub Committee on the celebrations.

Mohamed at a media conference had announced that the celebrations to be attended by the Prime Minister and leaders of the 14 component parties of the Barisan Nasional would be aired live from the Stadium Merdeka.

The event was considered significant because of Dr Mahathir's retirement next month.

Copies of the RTM apology statement had been sent to the Prime Minister's office, the Deputy Prime Minister's office and to the BN Secretary-General.

-- BERNAMA

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