

Debate with me first, Nazri tells Anwar
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Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Nazri Aziz challenged opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim to a debate on the Apco issue.

He was reacting to a challenge that Anwar issued to Najib Tun Razak to debate the opposition's 100-day plan, which the Prime Minister had described as irresponsible.

Nazri (left), in an SMS to Bernama, said: "Don't be a coward. Ask him on the Apco issue and debate with me first."

Anwar had claimed to have documents showing that the international PR company Apco Worldwide was involved in creating the 1Malaysia concept and the "One Israel" campaign -- which was contradicted by documents, which Nazri showed the media.

Following failure to produce proof of what he alleged, Anwar was suspended for six months from attending Dewan Rakyat sittings after the Rights and Privileges Committee held that he had lied.

The Minister of Information, Communication and Culture, Rais Yatim, said that challenging a prime minister to a debate is an old gimmick to get publicity.

"I don't think the Prime Minister will fall for the trick. Anwar, in his desperate situation, will grab any opportunity to try to disprove anything the Prime Minister says or discredit whatever he does," he told reporters in Kuala Lumpur.

The Independent MP for Pasir Mas, Ibrahim Ali, said Najib need not entertain any request from Anwar, who is no expert in economics or finance.

"Anwar only acts as though he is smart. He is pakar putar alam (a spin artiste)," he said.

Director of the Institute for Ethnic Studies of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Shamsul Amri Baharudin said Anwar's challenge to debate seemed an act of desperation.

- Bernama

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