

Nazri wants Malott banned from Malaysia
Malaysiakini.com
February 14, 2011

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz will be proposing that the Cabinet ban former US ambassador to Malaysia John R Malott from entering the Malaysia.

This follows Malott's scathing criticism of the Najib administration's handling of race relations in an article published by the Wall Street Journal last week.

According to a report published by Sin Chew Daily today, Nazri had described Malott's article as "lies and defamation". Malott defamed our government through foreign newspaper. How would he know the real situation if he did not reside in Malaysia? We know he is a staunch supporter of PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim," said Nazri yesterday during a function in Kuala Kangsar.

He said that although the federal government cannot take any legal action against Malott, a travel ban can be imposed. This is not because we disagree to his views or suppress freedom of expression, but he was lying," said Nazri. He can continue to write his article anywhere but not Malaysia because his writings are totally untrue. He claimed that the current situation is worse than that during May 13, 1969. This is blatant lie."

Malott might sue dailies

In his article, Malott, who ended his three-year tenure as ambassador here in 1998, told Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to take "a long look in the mirror" if he was serious about achieving his 1Malaysia goal. Despite the government's new catchphrase, racial and religious tensions are higher today than when Najib took office in 2009.

"Indeed, they are worse than at any time since 1969, when at least 200 people died in racial clashes between the majority Malay and minority Chinese communities," wrote Malott. He blamed the recent escalation of tensions on the government for "tolerating, and in some cases provoking, ethnic factionalism through words and actions".

The article has evoked strong criticism from BN leaders and BN-aligned news organisations.

Umno-owned Utusan Malaysia and NST had also reproduced an article on Jan 13 by American right-wing writer Rachel Motte who refuted Malott's arguments and described the latter as Anwar's "pet. Malott had since contacted Motte to inform her that several assertions in her article were inaccurate and potentially libelous. The said article on Motte's blog has since been removed.

According to Malott's latest article which was posted by blogger Din Merican, he said that he is now contemplating legal action against both dailies. In an immediate reaction, Malott told Malaysiakini that Nazri was expressing his personal opinion and he would "wait and see" what the cabinet will decide.

"I don't have any plans to come to Malaysia, so they are really risking an international embarrassment for nothing. Knowing Najib as I do, I am sure that cooler heads than Nazri's will prevail.

"It is ironic that Nazri says I don't know what I talking about since I am not in Malaysia - and then he turns around and wants to ban me from coming to find out what the truth is."

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malysiakini.com/news/155981>