

Zunar rejects cartoonist award from Najib

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By: Hazlan Zakaria

Political cartoonist Zunar said that he rejected an award that was to be conferred by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak for the 1Malaysia cartoon and animation exhibition at Pasar Seni, last Sunday.

“I don’t want awards or money. What I want are my rights. Return my rights to me,” the cartoonist, whose real name is Zulkiflee Anwar Ulhaque, told Malaysiakini.

suaram scorpene case fundraising dinner 160612 zunar“Anyway Najib is the one who is supposed to confer the award. The man under whose administration I was arrested, my books were banned and confiscated, police raided my office and restrictions were placed on publishers, distributors and printers from printing and publishing my book.

“Return my rights, allow me to publish my books and take away the restrictions against me, then maybe I shall consider to attend.”

Zunar (above) had also spoken out against what he perceived to be Najib’s attempt to make cartoonists toe the government line.

He related how he was approached by the joint organisers of the event, Cartoonist At Work (CAW) and Putera Umno who wanted him to be one of the recipients of the cartoonist achievement award.

“I rejected it because I think it is an attempt to buy and silence me,” said Zunar, pointing out that CAW’s patron is actually Sohaimi Shahadan, a Putera Umno exco member.

CAW have also recently received a RM5 million grant from the Information, Communication and Culture Ministry to produce local cartoon and animation products.

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