Najib defends ban on use of 'Allah' by non-Muslims
MalaysiaKini.com
April 26, 2013

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has reportedly defended the government's decision to ban the use of the word 'Allah' by non-Muslims, saying that Muslims and Christians should not upset each other.

"The concept of Allah is different in the Muslim sense than in the Christian sense, we should not upset the Muslims and Muslims should not upset the Christians, we have been living in harmony for years and it should continue," he was quoted as saying in an interview with international news channel Al-Jazeera.

The 30-minute interview will be aired at 12.30pm tomorrow with three repeats over the following two days, according to a statement by Al-Jazeera today.

The term 'Allah' had been used as a Malay translation for the word 'God' - especially in Malay-language Bibles - until the ban in 2007.

The High Court later ruled in 2009 that the ban was unconstitutional, but the ruling has since been suspended pending an appeal.

In the interview, Najib also reportedly ruled out a debate against his arch rival, PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim.

"There are many ways to reach out to the public, both political parties have a lot of space in Malaysia... It is unlikely that we will have a debate, we need to engage with the people; the opposition will engage with people," he reportedly said in the 'Talk to Al-Jazeera' segment.

This was in spite of the Universiti Malaya Centre for Election and Democracy (Umcedel) survey results published yesterday, which found that 63 percent of voters in the peninsula wish to see Najib and Anwar debate their respective party manifestos.

The remaining respondents were evenly split between those who are unsure, and those who believe that such debate is unnecessary.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/228095