

Liow: MCA does not interfere in The Star

MalaysiaKini.com

Aug 21, 2013

By Kow Kwan Yee

MCA deputy president Liow Tiong Lai has come to defence of the party's ownership of local English daily The Star, by stating that it is a free market and it makes no intervention in the newspaper's editorial policy.

"Although MCA owns part of the shares in The Star, this does not mean that MCA has intervened on press freedom," Liow said.

NONEHe added that it was important for the media to be blessed with freedom and space.

Asked whether it was proper for a political party to own a daily newspaper as its mouthpiece, Liow said every unit in The Star has its own autonomy in terms of operations under the free market.

Liow was speaking at a press conference after officiating the graduation ceremony of the One World Han Xing College of Journalism & Communications in Kuala Lumpur today.

Liow belonged to Team B during the internal MCA crisis of 2001, the faction that objected to the party buying over Nanyang Press.

MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek had earlier quashed talk that the party planned to secretly sell off its shares in the English daily.

In his speech earlier, Liow said the government embraced a free information policy without interfering with the operations of the mass media and this was obvious, especially when it came to Malaysian press freedom.

'No irresponsible hype'

"However, this does not indicate that the government allows any sort of irresponsible hype, because uncontrolled information will eventually disrupt the social order," he said.

In recent years, Liow said, cases of abuse have taken place happened frequently in the social network, such as the invasion of privacy and incitement of racial and religious sentiments, which had created chaotic scenes.

He also noted the ongoing chaotic situation in Egypt, where a number of journalists reporting on there were reported to have been killed.

"The so-called 'paparazzi' style of disseminating information is harmful to a developing country like Malaysia, and our multi-racial community needs positive and constructive reports to avoid depletion of resources and wasting of time," he added.

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