

NGO head and Lester to brief media, next week

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By Radzi Razak

NGO chief Ramesh Rao and Sarawak Report whistleblower Lester Melanyi will finally make an appearance together to state their case to the media.

However, Ramesh (photo) said today no date has been set as yet, but the joint press conference, along with the release of a third confession video by Lester, would take place next week.

"It's going to be next week. Lester will be here.

"We have to wait for the police investigation to be done first, but Lester will be here with me," he told a press conference at his office in Petaling Jaya.

Ramesh heads a little-known NGO called Pertubuhan Minda dan Sosial Prihatin (PMSP).

Lester told Malaysiakini yesterday that he would be in Kuala Lumpur today to give a statement to the press on his expose on Sarawak Report, which came to light last week.

Why use a bankrupt?

On July 15, Ramesh had lodged a police report on an alleged conspiracy by whistleblower website Sarawak Report and opposition figures to smear 1MDB and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Meanwhile, Ramesh dismissed suggestions that Lester's bankruptcy had any bearing on his credibility.

He said Sarawak Report editor Clare Rewcastle-Brown had paid for Lester and his family's trip to London.

"If she knew he was bankrupt, why would she hire him? Now who is morally bankrupt?

"Why would someone pay for the whole family (for their trip) to London using her personal credit card? The fare is not cheap. Moreover, it was on Malaysian Airlines," he said.

Lester was declared bankrupt on June 2012 and would thus be unable to go abroad, except under special circumstances.

Minister never met Lester

On the extent of BN strategic communication director Abdul Rahman Dahlan's involvement in the matter, Ramesh said the former had never met Lester.

Ramesh said it was he who first documented Lester's story and Abdul Rahman was later asked to expose the matter.

"I am pro-government. In the beginning, I went to Abdul Rahman. He told me to make sure everything is in order.

"Abdul Rahman never accused anyone. I met him first before making the police report [...] but he had never met Lester before," said Ramesh.

'Wrong photograph used'

Ramesh also admitted that a photograph of another man was mistakenly used to identify the web designer who allegedly fabricated Sarawak Report articles on 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), reports Bernama.

He said despite the mistake in the video, which the web designer allegedly said he was hired by Rewcastle-Brown to fabricate articles on 1MDB, what was said by Lester was true.

"We (Krishnan and Lester) had mistakenly identified the web designer in the video. It was a photograph of a sales manager of a rail service in Britain," he said.

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