

Criticise but don't insult, says Zahid on Zunar cartoons

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While the government welcomes constructive criticism, insults are not only unwelcome, but may be unethical and immoral, argued Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He was commenting on political cartoonist Zunar, who had received the 2016 Cartooning for Peace [Award](#) on May 3 in a ceremony held at the Palais Eynard in Geneva, Switzerland.

Zunar had also exhibited large-scale reproductions of his works which are highly critical of the government and pointedly focused on Prime Minister Najib Razak and his wife, in the Swiss city.

"Let us have a difference of opinion, but to insult someone, let alone a leader?" Ahmad Zahid said in a press conference after the Home Ministry Family Day in Cheras today.

When asked about former United Nations secretary-general and Swiss Foundation Cartooning for Peace honorary president Kofi Annan's remarks that does not paint a pretty picture of Malaysia during the award ceremony, the deputy prime minister clarified there is a difference between criticism and insult.

"I accept criticism, especially those that are constructive as it is something healthy, but to insult is very different," he explained.

In his speech while presenting the award to Zunar and another cartoonist, Annan noted that threats Zunar received in his country of origin because of his commitment to an open and transparent society, no longer allow him practice his profession, urging all to work towards removing such bars to freedom of expression.

Zahid however said that all should also put themselves in the shoes of those who were insulted, and asked what they do if they too were insulted blatantly.

"We should just avoid insulting (people)," he advised.

Asked if any action should be taken, he said it should be left up to the police to decide.

KL flash floods: Don't point fingers

Ahmad Zahid also commented on the flash floods which struck several areas of Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

"Because I am chairperson of the cabinet committee for natural disasters, that (flash floods) is under my responsibility.

"I think I will put aside differences of portfolios of whichever ministries or agencies, (because) what's important are the victims and the rakyat in general," he said.

To help resolve and prevent this problem, he said that he will have a meeting with the relevant ministries and agencies to discuss this issue.

When asked if the flash floods might be a result of corruption within the bureaucracy, he said that he will instruct one or two bodies to look into this matter and present the report to him before he chairs the said meeting so he can take further action.