

TV3 fined RM50,000 for Aidilfitri commercial
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Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Berhad (TV3) has been slapped with a maximum fine of RM50,000 by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) for its controversial Hari Raya Aidilfitri commercial.

The commercial aired by the private television station which is claimed to have insulted Muslims was taken off-air soon after a public outcry.

Deputy Information Communication and Culture Minister Joseph Salang Gandum told the Dewan Rakyat today that after wrapping up its investigation the MCMC found the commercial to be "insulting and instigating".

Independent Kulim Bandar Baru MP Zulkifli Noordin asked the ministry to state the action taken against TV3 for showing the 'Sinari Lebaran' commercial.

Zulkifli added in his question that the festive commercial had "insulted and degraded Islam".

Salang said 'Sinari Lebaran' was investigated under Section 206 (3) of the MCMC Act and as stated under the Act a maximum compound of RM50,000 was imposed on TV3.

Meanwhile, on another matter related to Zulkifli's question on the monitoring efforts and enforcement on the spread of "religious and racial slanders" through the electronic and cyber media, Joseph said:

"Those offences are under Section 211 and 233 of the MCMC Act and it does not only focus on article written on websites but also covers the visitors, their interaction and seditious comments on religion and race," said Salang.

"For more serious offences, for instance insulting Islam and other religions, which can instigate racial sentiments that can threaten the nation's security, we have to refer to the Sedition Act 1948 and the Internal Security Act," he said.

It's up to AG to act on Namewee now

In a supplementary question Zulkifli also asked what was the rationale behind the inaction against infamous rapper Wee Meng Chee, who goes by his pseudonym Namewee.

Namewee had recently stirred a national uproar with his racially-tinged songs and video against two principals who had allegedly made racial slurs, on *YouTube*, an online video hosting website.

Citing lyrics of Namewee's latest song '*Nah*' and its profanities, Zulkifli said that it was degrading to Islam and asked if the former was taking advantage of the leniency of the government.

"(The song goes) four letter word racism... the Education Ministry is insolent... Siti Aishah sucks banana. He (Namewee) even used rude hand gesture and vulgar pictures," said Zulkifli.

However, Salang said that MCMC has taken action against Namewee for his profanity but the agency does not have the power to charge the rapper in court.

"We can only investigate and submit our findings to the attorney-general (AG) to take further action but that doesn't mean the ministry hasn't done anything," he said.

"I would like to remind (everyone) that all actions that can offend any person can be prosecuted and I believe that the AG will take appropriate measures against such irresponsible acts," said Salang, who is also the BN Julau MP.

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