

Parliament will not go live
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There will be no live telecast of parliamentary proceedings in the foreseeable future as it would affect productivity of Malaysians, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Nazri Aziz today.

Nazri, in hearing the objections of several parliamentarians in the Dewan Rakyat, added that the government's stand would remain.

"The proposal for live telecast has been put forward to the prime minister (Abdullah Ahmad Badawi). It was also put forward to the speaker. They have decided to turn them down," said Nazri during a debate session.

At present, only the question-and-answer session is aired, albeit via news summaries by television broadcast stations.

"Airing the sessions live, from 10am to 1pm ... from 2:30pm to 5:30pm .. That's a total of six hours. These are times when people are working. It would disrupt the productivity," said Nazri.

Teresa Kok (BN-Seputeh) then asked if the government would consider a delayed telecast of the proceedings in Dewan.

"They (viewers) would see the naughty backbenchers like Sri Gading, Jerai and Kinabatangan and their antics. BN has already secured 92 percent of the seats. What is there to be worried about?" she said.

Right to know

Chong Eng (DAP-Bukit Mertajam) said the matter of telecasting should not be confined to how the ruling BN or opposition is perceived.

"People have the right to know what is happening in Parliament, whether it is aired live or delayed telecast. The question-and-answer session can be held at 9 pm," she said.

"The point is people want to follow what is going on. Let the taxpayers decide on their own how parliament is perceived."

Nazri then relented and said the session most likely be telecast, if agreed by the prime minister, would be the question and answer session.

"As a start, we can begin with the question-and-answer (session). It is simple. There is the question and there is the answer. But the final say is still with the prime minister," he said.