

**Minister confident media council won't restrict press freedom**  
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The soon-to-be established National Media Council will ensure the local media is more transparent and responsible and will not restrict press freedom, said Information Minister Ahmad Shabery Cheek today.

Ahmad Shabery, according to a Bernama report, said the media council was a better way to run the media and that many countries had their own press commissions or media councils.

"Some countries like the United Kingdom have press complaint commissions where people dissatisfied because they had been defamed or put in a bad light can seek remedy," he told reporters at Angkasapuri where he attended after his ministry's Aidilfitri open house.

He was responding to questions on an announcement by Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar on Monday that the council would be established soon to identify existing weaknesses to ensure better accuracy in reporting.

shabery cheek in parliament 160708Ahmad Shabery also said that the new council will help end the common perception that complaints on the government were being addressed very slowly.

He added that his ministry will be holding discussions with stakeholders to identify existing weaknesses so that appropriate remedial action could be taken.

"This is a serious matter as it concerns how the Fourth Estate can be better supervised so that it is more transparent and responsible.

"When we say more responsible, we do not want to see only the agenda of certain groups being pushed forward and not the interests of all Malaysians," he said.

He also said that models in countries like Australia and Britain would be studied before the matter was finalised.

**Don't publish lies**

The minister also reminded bloggers and Internet media practitioners to remain responsible. He however said that the numbers of these people abusing the medium was small.

"They (bloggers and Internet media practitioners) must also be more responsible and not publish lies and falsehoods. Also in the context of multiracial harmony, it is important to know when to exercise restraint," he said.

He said the overriding concern in having the council was to preserve the peace and national harmony.

"It is all about maintaining a balance. There cannot be absolute freedom neither can there be too much restrictions," he added.

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