

No govt interference, says PM

KUALA LUMPUR: The journalistic profession must remain independent and function without external interference to ensure that freedom of speech remains alive in the country.

In his speech at the National Journalists Day (Hawana) 2022 celebration in Melaka yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob gave his assurance that the government would not interfere with media organisations executing their duties and publishing news reports.

He said news reports served as “reference” for the authorities to take action, including providing assistance to improve people’s wellbeing and welfare.

“The government will always listen to issues raised by the media.

“All ministries and government agencies have provided co-operation and assisted the media in distributing balanced and

accurate information to the people.

“I want to give my assurance that the government has nothing to hide in the distribution of information that is not only important for the people, but also for the nation’s development.

“It is the government’s hope that the media fraternity will continue to publish fair and proactive news reports when proposing recommendations to solving issues raised by their outlets.”

He said he had faith and confidence that the country’s media fraternity would continue to hold true to the “checks and balance” practice before disseminating information through news reports.

He said misreporting would affect the integrity and faith of the people towards the media and their role in the country.

On a related issue, he said journalism was not spared from the disruption brought about by

rapid technological advancements, which has given rise to *wartawan segera* (citizen journalists).

This, said Ismail Sabri, contributed to the spread of fake or inaccurate news online.

“I hope media organisations and journalists will help refute fake news. In order to do this, journalists in the country must remain united and play their role in disseminating accurate information.”

To ensure the journalism profession will continue to be respected among the people, Ismail Sabri said the new breed of reporters should be given sufficient formal training to develop their expertise, apart from building their responsibility and integrity.

The prime minister also welcomed the Melaka Declaration 2022 that was unveiled at this year’s Hawana celebration and proposed for the establishment of the Malaysian Centre for Study of Journalism to uphold standards, raise professionalism level of journalism in the country.



Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob