

'Media can help govt succeed'

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By Alang Bendahara

KUALA LUMPUR: The media has been described as an important strategic partner to assist the government in achieving its transformation programme.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak called on the local, foreign, online and alternative media to work together with the government on its transformation plan.

"The government has implemented changes like the Economic Transformation Programme and the recently announced Political Transformation Plan on the eve of Malaysia Day. But to ensure they are a success, we need the full cooperation of the press," said Najib in his speech at the Media Appreciation Night 2011 (Malam Media Perdana 2011) at Dewan Perdana Felda here last night.

Present were his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, and Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and his wife, Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman.

Najib said the government was always open with the press and willing to listen to their ideas.

"We recently announced a review of the censorship policy and licensing for media organisations in the country," he said.

However, Najib reminded the media to act responsibly and remember the core values of empathy, moderation and mutual respect when carrying out their duties.

Najib also highlighted the importance of bloggers and the role played by foreign media correspondents in the country.

"The government plans to set up a foreign correspondents club in Malaysia. It will be the first to foster better cooperation between them and the government."

Najib also said government officers and ministers must be open to views from foreign correspondents as they could help the government to disseminate the right information.

"I've been informed that they had difficulties with government officers when they call up for information. They said the opposition was more receptive.

"Foreign correspondents can be an asset to the government. They can provide accurate reporting about the country if they have the information."

The media night was the first of its kind jointly organised by the Prime Minister's Office and several other ministries. The event was also unique as it brought together the local media, bloggers and foreign press.

Later, Najib presented certificates of appreciation to representatives of the 54 media members who joined the Kelab Putera 1Malaysia humanitarian aid mission to Somalia.

He also presented a cheque of RM425,933.04 -- insurance payout, donations and aid -- to family of the late Bernama TV cameraman Noramfaizul Mohd Noor, 39, who was killed by a stray bullet during the Somalian mission.

Najib presented a token of appreciation of RM11,000 to TV3 cameraman Aji Saregar Mazlan who was injured in the same incident.

Earlier, Najib said the tragedy would serve as an inspiration to media professionals in the country to continue giving their best in the profession.

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