

Pak Lah: Rights of media personnel must be respected
TheStarOnline
May 03, 2012
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KEPALA BATAS: Former Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi says the rights of media personnel must be respected and that they should not be prohibited from discharging their duties.

He said it was unfortunate and regrettable that while carrying out their duties during the April 28 Bersih 3.0 rally in Dataran Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur, some journalists and photographers were treated badly and were hurt.

"That, to me, should not have happened. They are doing their job.

"Give them a chance to do their job. Why should they be hit by those who do not like them?," he told reporters after meeting Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) leaders in Penang Golf Resort here Thursday.

Abdullah said it did not give the right for anyone to hurt journalists and cause bodily injuries to them.

He said scuffles could occur at any time and place, noting that there was no guarantee that such incidences would not happen even in a peaceful gathering.

"Ideally, there should not be such gatherings in the first place.

"If anyone has issues, they should just meet up with the authorities concerned, whether in a group of 10 or 20 persons, to conduct necessary discussions.

"After that, they can make statements (to the media) that they had conveyed their views to the authorities on the matter," he said.

Abdullah, who acknowledged the celebration of World Press Freedom Day on Thursday, also stressed that journalists must always strive hard to boost their integrity as well as the quality of news that they report.

He said he hoped journalists would maintain their good image and display high integrity that would convince the people about the reports that were carried in their respective media.

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