

Ahmad Shabery Proposes TV Nusantara For Malay Archipelago
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BENGKULU (Indonesia), Feb 10 (Bernama) -- Cooperation between the Malaysian and Indonesian media could be strengthened with the setting up of TV Nusantara as a global broadcaster, said Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

Riding the waves of current media inclination in disseminating news from own perspective through global TV channels using own language, he said TV Nusantara could use the Malay language in its news broadcast.

"If the Arab world has Al-Jazeera while others have CNN, I feel it is time for Nusantara (the Malay Archipelago) to have TV Nusantara," he said amid a thunderous applause from media practitioners from Indonesia and Malaysia at a dinner conjunction with the Indonesian Media Day here, Sunday.

Ahmad Shabery, who is on a two-day visit to attend the Indonesian Media Assembly, said he had discussed the idea with media practitioners in Malaysia who felt that Jakarta should spearhead TV Nusantara with the support of the Malaysian government and media.

He cited France, Italy, Spain, Japan (NHK), China (CCTV), South Korea (Arirang) and Germany (Duetche Wella), apart from Al-Jazeera, as countries that owned news channels in their own language.

If London's could forge a special relationship with Washington through language and culture, Ahmad Shabery said why not Malaysia and Indonesia through the Malay language.

"If British's ties with America, 'right or wrong this is my brother', why not between Malaysia and Indonesia, 'right or wrong this is my brother'," he said, drawing cheers from the crowd.

Ahmad Shabery hoped meetings between governments and businesses of both countries could be arranged to pave the way for the setting up of TV Nusantara.

He said TV Nusantara could tap the huge regional market of more 240 million people in Indonesia, Malaysia (nearly 30 million), Southern Thailand (several million), Brunei and Singapore, representing half of ASEAN's population who understand the Malay language.

"When we talk of the ASEAN Community, starting next year, let Nusantara news hegemony will be part of the ASEAN Community's strength," he said.

Ahmad Shabery, who later witnessed the video footage exchange between Antara and BERNAMA, congratulated both national news agencies for forging alliance in the field of broadcasting.

BERNAMA was represented by its editor-in-chief, Datuk Zulkefli Salleh while Antara by its chief executive officer, Saiful Hadi at the event.

Present was Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim.

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