

**Difference Of Opinion Ok, So Long As Based On Facts - Prime Minister
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SHAH ALAM, July 2 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak stresses that differing opinion is not a problem as long as it is based on facts and is constructive in nature.

However, he said it became a problem when there were certain quarters who disseminated opinion or news which could create doubt and erode the confidence of the people in the government.

"A review found that some of the opinions were baseless or off target...This is the challenge in the new environment especially the media practitioners because they are chasing news.

"They want to be the first in the news because (some) want to form perceptions, not to ensure accuracy of news, it (accuracy) is as if it is secondary. When a perception is formed, it is very hard to scrape it off," he said.

Najib was speaking at a breaking of the fast with the media at the Karangkrak Group Complex here, tonight.

Najib cited an example during the last general election that allegedly 40,000 Bangladeshi voters were waiting to vote for Barisan Nasional (BN), to the extent there were those who believed in the claim.

"It will take 1,000 jumbo aircraft to ferry that many, but no one asked until it went viral and damaged BN," said the Prime Minister.

Also present were his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek, Bernama chairman Datuk Abdul Rahman Sulaiman, Bernama General Manager Datuk Zulkefli Salleh and Editor-in-Chief Datuk Zakaria Abdul Wahab.

The Prime Minister said the dissemination of baseless news also involved the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (IMDB) issue which purportedly used the Pilgrimage and Fund Board (TH) to rescue the company.

"The story went down to the ground, so much so the TH depositors, namely, the 'makcik and pakcik' in the villages were all angry. It was also viralled," he said.

Subsequently, Najib said the truth finally emerged and there were opposition members of Parliament urging TH not to sell the land connected to IMDB because it could generate a much bigger profit, but once again the damage was done.

In this regard, Najib asked all quarters whether politicians, government and media

practitioners to be responsible towards any dissemination of opinions and news.

"We seek the truth in politics. So, I want the media to seek the truth. Be fair, that's all I ask.

"God willing, we will be safe here and the hereafter if we use the truth as our guide," he said.

Earlier, the Prime Minister spent time to visit the Karangraf magazine editorial division and book shop to see the latest publications of the media group.

Just after breaking the fast, Najib and other guests performed the Magrib, Isyak and tarawih prayers at the Karangraf Mosque.

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