

RTM Won't Air Debate Between Nazri, Dr Mahathir - Salleh

KUALA LUMPUR, March 19 (Bernama) -- Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) will not be airing the live telecast of a debate between former prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed and Tourism and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz.

Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Dr Salleh Said Keruak said the debate, scheduled to take place in Kuala Kangsar, Perak on March 25, was purely between the two persons.

"The debate is not organised by RTM...We don't have plans to air the live telecast of the debate," he told a press conference here today.

Yesterday, Home Minister Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed said his ministry had approved the permit application for the debate after receiving it from the organiser.

The debate, to be held at the Sultan Azlan Shah Mara Junior Science College (MRSM), has been the talk of the town lately as it would touch on issues including the Bumiputra Malaysia Finance Limited (BMF).

Meanwhile, Salleh said the act of sabotaging the country's economy was now a serious matter and a loss to the people.

He said the allegations by the opposition such as Malaysia was now an unstable country, its Employees Provident Fund (EPF) almost gone bankrupt and the government could not afford to pay the salaries of civil servants were irresponsible act.

"The opposition should criticise the government in a constructive manner and based on facts, not for their political mileage as the act of sabotaging the economy will be detrimental to Malaysians as a whole," Salleh said.

The minister was commenting on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak yesterday that Malaysia almost lost a huge investment from Saudi Aramco due to the unpatriotic attitude of certain quarters who channelled incorrect information on this country to the Saudi Arabian oil company.

Salleh said members of the public were urged not to trust unverified information on social media and instead, to refer to SEBENARNYA.MY, a one-stop web portal developed to curb the spread of false news and for the public to check on the authenticity of news spread through social media.

"The government is responsible in providing accurate information to its people. The SEBENARNYA.MY portal is one of the government's initiatives to provide real news to the society in rebutting slanders being spread on the social media," he said.

In another development, asked on when the government would ban the screening of the film 'Beauty and the Beast' in the country should Walt Disney not meet the Film Censorship Board's (LPF) request for a minor cut involving a gay scene, Salleh said LPF had strong grounds to issue the order.

"We'll wait for the final decision by LPF," he said.

In the meantime, Salleh advised the public not to make matters worse over the issue of diplomatic ties between Malaysia and North Korea by spreading false news on the social media.

He said this was because Kuala Lumpur would negotiate with Pyongyang on the nine Malaysians who were not allowed to leave the republic.

The diplomatic spat between Malaysia and North Korea began with the assassination of Kim Jong-nam, the estranged half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (klia2) on Feb 13.

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