



KESATUAN KEBANGSAAN WARTAWAN SEMENANJUNG MALAYSIA
NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

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To News Editors:

PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) urges the government to immediately facilitate the setting up of a Media Council to self regulate the print media.

The time is ripe to establish such council in view of new challenges faced by newspapers.

Newspapers have to adhere to provisions under the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA) 1984 and other guidelines issued from time to time by Home Ministry officials.

Print media owners are also aware that their annual publishing licence could be withheld or revoked.

All these restrict the freedom of speech, expression and information.

Finally, the print media is being rivaled by alternative media like newsportals to retain readership and circulation.

But in the quest of disseminating information, NUJ takes the stand that no newspapers should be allowed to sensationalise and publish inaccurate news that causes friction among people of different races, religion, languages and cultures.

In this regards, the establishment of a media council is vital to ensure newspaper practice ethical journalism.

The NUJ is of the view, the industry itself should decide on its destiny.

The government could provide the funding but media council members must come from, among others media editors, print media interest groups, Bar Council and eminent individuals to represent the public.

Preferably the council should be led by a retired Federal Court judge.

The NUJ is of the view tht the PPPA should be abolished once the council is in operation.



Even the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia had on July 7, last year called on the government to initiate the formation of an independent media council through a mandatory industry code through a complaint bureau to arbitrate disputes and compliance monitoring.

The NUJ last month organised a media council workshop and speakers from India, Australia, Indonesia and Hong Kong gave their views how such organisations operated in their countries.

It was unanimously resolved that an independent council should be set up.

Note: This statement is in response to Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein's statement that newspapers should be given leeway despite stringent laws under the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA).

Hishammuddin said he wants to call the chief editors of every newspaper for a discussion.

On behalf of the executive council.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Anbalagan', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

V.ANBALAGAN
General Secretary