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Corruption

ALLEGATION OF CORRUPTION IN MALAYSIA DOES NOT AFFECT INVESTMENT

KANGAR, April 12 (Bernama) -- The allegation by the West that corruption was rampant in Malaysia will not affect the investment climate in the country, says Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said the people in the West made the allegation when they failed to secure any contract in this country.

"When they come here they want contracts, when they fail they offer bribes but when they secure the contract they keep quiet although they had offered bribes," he told reporters here at the end of his two-day working visit to Perlis today.

Dr Mahathir said if they did not want to invest here there would be other investors from elsewhere who would invest in this country.

He was commenting on the report by "Transparency International (IT)", an observer group in Berlin partly funded by Britain, the United States as well as large American corporations, which released its first international corruption index that included Malaysia and 40 other countries.

Malaysia stands at number 23 in the list of corrupt countries that did not include Russia, East European and African nations.

According to the Prime Minister he had read reports on many leaders in Europe who were involved in corruption.

"On the other hand, if we have our own observer unit and study their (European countries) position, they are actually involved in corruption," he said.

"That's why they come here and sometimes they don't get contracts, they make various proposals like Pergau, for example, and accuse me of taking RM50,000.00," he added.

In this context, he said, if investors from the West did not want to come here, Japanese investors would take the opportunity to invest here.

On his visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina next week, the Prime Minister hoped he could help the people there to reconstruct their country which was devastated by the war.

He said Malaysia hoped the visit could nurture close relations between the Balkan states and this country.

"We also hope to see actual conditions in the Balkan states," he said.

Yesterday a Wisma Putera official said Dr Mahathir would visit the three Balkan states and would receive the highest award, The Dragon of Bosnia, from the Bosnia-Herzegovina government.

Asked on development in Perlis, he said he was satisfied with the level of development achieved by the state which he described as more developed than some other states.

Asked to comment on money politics which still existed in UMNO, Dr Mahathir who is also UMNO president said the party was aware of the practice.

However, the problem was that the party could not act based on allegations alone without any proof, he said.

"If there are evidence please submit them, but in fairness we cannot pass judgement just because someone made an allegation," he explained.

"In that case I'm also involved in alleged corruption and have another wife in Singapore (as had been reported)," he said.

He was confident that UMNO had a bright future unless it was God's will that a disaster occurred.

He said the party also acknowledged the contribution from the Wanita and

Youth movements as they were also part of the party and their contribution could not be brushed aside. -- BERNAMA
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