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Abdullah-Asiaweek

ASIAWEEK REPORT INTENDED TO DISUNITE UMNO, SAYS ABDULLAH

SHAH ALAM, Nov 25 (Bernama) -- Speculations raised in the western media always carry the ulterior motive to break the unity in Malaysia, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

They always had their own motive to weaken the country's economy, he said, citing as an example speculations in the Asiaweek magazine that Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's emergence in Umno could threaten Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's position.

"The report is naughty...making issue of a non-issue to break our unity in Umno," Abdullah, who is also an Umno vice-president, said after witnessing the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Shawal Farm Sdn Bhd and Bangladeshi firm Aymon Nessa Trader at the World Malay Trade Expo (Matrex '96), here.

He said the report was a subtle attempt to weaken the country's economy by certain parties who would be happy to see other countries in disarray.

Such reports had caused difficulty to the party because many people had to make statements to calm the situation, he said.

Abdullah also said that he agreed with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that the Australian media were big liars who published articles running down Malaysia to increase their sales.

Dr Mahathir yesterday rapped several Australian print media which printed negative reports that there were to be a bloodbath in Malaysia following the demonstration which broke up the second Asia Pacific Conference on East Timor (Apcet II) in Kuala Lumpur recently.

Abdullah said the Australia government itself was troubled by the attitude of its media which had exceeded the bounds in publishing negative stories on Malaysia.

On Malaysia's relations with Indonesia after the Apcet II incident, he said Indonesia agreed with Malaysia's handling of the matter and the Indonesian government had written to thank Malaysia.

At the signing, Shawal Farms was represented by its managing director, Mohammad Ahmad Shawal and Aymon by its owner, Mizul Karim. The MoU is to enable the company to distribute Shawal's cooking oil in Bangladesh. --

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