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Mahathir-Jacko

JACKO'S CONCERT A CHANCE TO WATCH WORLD CLASS ENTERTAINER

ALOR SETAR, Oct 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the government has consented to the staging of the Michael Jackson concert as it is an opportunity for Malaysians to watch a star in action.

"We are giving fans a chance to watch a live performance of the famous entertainer. It is never our intention to label anything as bad because it is up to us to make our own assessment as to what is good or bad," he said at a news conference after opening the new building of the Sekolah Menengah Keat Hwa (Persendirian) here.

He said that the government allowed the concert to be held provided that it was properly managed.

"If it is out of control, it will be the last time we are giving our consent," he said.

Asked on the move by the Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) to seek a court order to restrain the staging of the concert, Dr Mahathir said that it was up to the MYC to do so.

"It is the right of the MYC whether or not to bring the matter to court," he said.

Although the MYC stated yesterday that it would abide by the government's decision, it had not made a final decision on their move to seek the court order to restrain the staging of the concert to be held at the Merdeka Stadium on Oct 27 and 29.

On the concern expressed by several non-governmental organisations that the concert might have negative effects on the youths, Dr Mahathir said that the government also took a serious view of such matters.

"We are also concerned," he said adding that there were many other factors which contributed to moral decay including pornographic books and materials over the Internet.

"Even if we do not watch (him) but still look at pornographic books or materials over the Internet...do we need to impose a ban on the Internet?," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that the government planned to set up primary school complexes comprising national primary school and the national type Chinese and Tamil primary schools.

He said that the move was aimed at fostering racial unity from the primary school level through joint activities.

The Prime Minister said that such a complex would occupy a large area but instead of a football field, it would have a gymnasium for students to carry out recreational activities.

"In Europe, schools do not have wide areas for football fields because of limited space," he said.

Dr Mahathir however said that the government had not set a time frame for the implementation of the proposal.

Earlier in his speech, Dr Mahathir said that racial unity and prosperity in the country was the result of tolerance of the various races in the country.

He said that the new school building costing RM6 million could be built because of the prosperity and generosity of the community who donated towards the project. -- BERNAMA

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