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Mahathir-rights

MALAYSIA WILL SAFEGUARD BASIC RIGHTS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, March 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysia will continue to safeguard its fundamental rights and that includes disallowing minority groups or individuals from creating violence to the extent of affecting the majority.

"We don't care what what others say about the way we take care of our own basic rights. For us, safeguarding the interests of the majority is also safeguarding the basic human rights in this country," he told reporters after flagging off the Green Run 96 organised by the Science, Technology and Environment Ministry, here.

He was commenting on the United States government's move to continue listing Malaysia as among the countries that violate basic human rights including treating illegal immigrants badly.

Dr Mahathir said the government could not allow any party to incite the the people, resulting in problems like riots that might cause the people to suffer.

"We can't allow such a situation as human rights include protecting the interests of the people from extremists who are not bothered about the interests of others," he said.

Dr Mahathir said these groups felt that demonstrations were good until the people could not live properly, workers could not go to work and traders could not trade peacefully.

Asked if the United States should be asked to remove Malaysia from its list of nations that violate human rights, Dr Mahathir berkata: "No need... we need not care about what others say about us... the important thing is that we take care of our own fundamental rights."

Malaysia was unlike the United States which considered itself as a superpower that could easily punish others, he said, adding that Washington should look at itself and realise that it was violating the fundamental rights of others.

"They always violate the fundamental rights of other countries. They go to other countries, catch people and take them back, and punish others according to the their own laws," he said.

"I myself fear that they may come to this country, catch me to be taken there to be tried and put into prison."

The prime minister added: "Sometimes their police abuse the blacks and hispanics. They don't care about justice in other countries and act as if they alone are free of human rights violations."

The United States had previously tortured the black people who were slaves, he said, adding that although they are a small group in the country, they were the most to be imprisoned and the poorest in their country.

"Is this justice for a citizen?. This shows that there is no justice for the people and in fact violates their fundamental rights, " he said.

Dr Mahathir said the United States was a country that did not care for fundamental human rights because "fundamental rights include the lives of the people... enough food and drinks and freedom from poverty, sufferings and so on". -- Bernama

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