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Mahathir-Gore

GORE'S REMARKS VINDICATED DR MAHATHIR'S WARNING, SAYS EXPERT

From: Neville D'Cruz

MELBOURNE, Nov 27 (Bernama) -- One of Australia's leading journalists said United States vice president Al Gore's provocative remarks in Kuala Lumpur during the recent Apec Leaders Summit had only vindicated Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's warning of that Malaysia was under attack from foreign elements jealous of her success.

The "Australian Financial Review" Asian affairs expert Peter Hartcher said that at a stroke, Gore vindicated Dr Mahathir's warning.

"Mr Gore had done far more than intervene in a domestic political struggle to endorse one side over the other. By praising the reformasi movement, he had demonstrated that the pro-Anwar (former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim), pro-civil liberties forces were backed by official US policy.

"It seemed to be clear public confirmation that Dr Mahathir had not been insane but insightful," Hartcher said.

Hartcher said to urge Australia's leadership to mimic Gore was to advocate poking Anwar's so-called movement for reform in the eye.

He said Australian Prime Minister John Howard "raised directly with Dr Mahathir his concerns about the Anwar case and announced them publicly. He instructed his foreign minister (Alexander Downer) to meet Mr Anwar's wife, a clear gesture of sympathy.

"But to take the Gore approach is quixotically counterproductive. It would be a risk to Australian exports and jobs all for the purpose of inflicting yet more damage on Mr Anwar and the reformasi movement."

-- BERNAMA

NDC rn