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Mahathir-Economy

MAHATHIR: RACIAL ISSUES BEING EXPLOITED TO SUPPRESS ECONOMY

PULAU PINANG, Aug 11 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight external forces were exploiting racial issues to further suppress Malaysia's economy after having attacked the ringgit and the stock market.

The Prime Minister said they were trying to pit one race against another to destabilise the country.

By doing so, they hoped to scare away investors from coming to Malaysia, thus jeopardising efforts to stimulate the economy, he said when speaking at a meet-the-people gathering at the Pulau Pinang International Sports Arena.

In this regard, he urged the people to remain united to help government efforts to revive the economy and achieve objectives of Vision 2020 to transform Malaysia into a developed nation.

" Continued cooperation and mutual understanding among the various ethnic groups can help to revitalise the economy," he said.

He said they had resorted to various means including using the Internet to tell lies to pit the Hindus against the Muslims and the Chinese with the Malays.

He cited the recent spread of rumours of disturbances in the federal capital through the Internet as another example of their attempts to create anxiety among the people.

He likened the spread of lies and rumours via the Internet as the "modern poison-pen letter."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had proven its ability to develop the country on its own without external advice and assistance.

" Even if external expertise and technology were used, we paid them with our own money," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said the country's economic problems had no connection with corruption, nepotism and cronyism as alleged by outsiders.

" I'm confident we can overcome this (economic downturn) with the people's understanding of the problem," he said.

More than 10,000 people attended the gathering which is part of his working visits to the states to explain the current economic problems to the masses.

He had visited Kedah, Johor, Negeri Sembilan and Perak.

-- BERNAMA

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