

22 MAR 1998

Musa-Rights

MALAYSIA THE FORERUNNER ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, SAYS MUSA

SEGAMAT, March 22 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is the first country to have started a movement to get the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to give priority to economic issues and poverty in developing countries.

Commission chairman Tan Sri Musa Hitam said today that since 1993 when he first led the Malaysian delegation to the commission, Malaysia had taken the lead in raising human rights issues at the international level.

"If the people in developing countries continue to be poor, then it tantamounts to a violation of human rights that has been accepted by the international community," he told reporters after opening the Segamat Umno division delegates meeting, here.

Musa was asked to comment on a news report quoting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as saying that the rights of millions of Southeast Asian people had been violated as a result of the speculative attacks on the region's currencies and stock markets.

Dr Mahathir had said that these speculative activities had caused a depreciation of the region's currencies and share prices and millions of people to lose their jobs and run short of food and medicine as well as created a new wave of boat people.

Musa said the commission was too engrossed in pursuing political matters rather than tackling issues on poverty.

"Although we accept international opinion that politics is vital... what is more important to us is to overcome poverty," he added. -- BERNAMA

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