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Mahathir - troubles

RUMOUR-MONGERS ARE COWARDS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

LANGKAWI, Aug 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has branded Malaysians who spread rumours of disturbances in several locations in the federal capital yesterday as traitors and cowards.

"We shall track down these people but all have gone into hiding. They are just cowards. If they are brave enough, come out and say it openly," he said.

Malaysians should not pay any attention at all to such rumours, the prime minister said at a press conference after inspecting the Langkawi international shooting range here.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Home Minister, was commenting on news reports of rumoured troubles in the capital city, especially the Chow Kit shopping district and Puchong.

"There is no such thing happening. Only the ill-intentioned traitors are trying to cook up troubles," he said.

Rumours of disturbances in the capital city, spread through the Internet and electronic mail have raised public anxiety prompting panic-buying to stock up provisions.

Dr Mahathir assured the people that the country has enough security personnel to maintain public order.

"Moreover Malaysians are not of the type to clash and riot against each other," he said.

The prime minister hoped the media could play their role in getting rid of the rumour-mongering menace.

"The people should verify first rumours with the police or the newspapers as you tend to get to know things first," Dr Mahathir said when asked what the public should do upon hearing rumours.

Rumours were also circulated that Indonesian immigrants were arming themselves up to create disturbances following the government's decision not to renew their work permits after Aug 15.

-- BERNAMA

JM+NH rn