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Student body: US media not giving a true picture

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Malaysia Youth US Graduates Association and the MCA Club in the United States today criticised unfair US media reports which did not give a true picture of the economic and political situation in Malaysia.

These reports have disrupted the studies of Malaysian students in the US as many are concerned about their family members back home.

MYUSGA president Au Kok Huei said the association and the MCA Club had received many distress calls from Malaysian students in the US inquiring about the economic situation and the so-called "political unrest" here as reported in the US media.

"Many of these students are relying solely on foreign press reports and some are so worried that they have requested family members to leave the country," he told a Press conference today.

Also present were MCA Club in the US deputy president Alan Khoo and MYUSGA vice-president Theang Kok Foo.

There are more than 10,000 Malaysian students in the US. The MCA Club in the US has branches in 67 universities in the US. There are currently 5,500 members.

The MYUSGA, which was registered in Oct 1997, has 2,000 members. It is affiliated to graduate associations in Canada, Britain, Australia, Taiwan and Japan.

On Sept 19, the Umno Club of the United Kingdom and Eire had urged all Malaysian students' associations, in and outside Malaysia, to accept the country's political and economic changes in a rational manner.

It said all student associations should rally behind Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and support his efforts to overcome the country's problems.

Au said CNBC, for instance, repeated the demonstrations at Dataran Merdeka and this gave students the impression that the protests were ongoing instead of just being a one-off affair.

"This is unfair. They should now instead focus on how peaceful things are," he said, adding that the news reports gave the impression that there were riots in Malaysia.

He urged Malaysian students in the US to remain calm and continue giving full support to the Government by participating in activities that call for unity.

"We are considering lodging formal complaints with the various US media."

He said MYUSGA and the MCA Club had decided to join forces to bring accurate facts to Malaysian students abroad.

"Since the MCA Clubs in the US and Canada are affiliated with universities throughout America and Canada, they have provided a list of universities with large numbers of Malaysian students."

MYUSGA and the MCA Club, he said, would like to urge the Malaysian print media to distribute newspapers to the universities so students could have a clearer picture of the situation at home.

Among the universities are the University of Alabama, Arizona State University, University of Delaware and University of Florida.

"Right now, newspapers are delivered to only a few universities."

He said students could also get updates on the latest situation in Malaysia via the MYUSGA homepage.

"Once our students acquire accurate information, they can in turn disseminate the information to their foreign friends who might have been misled by the unfair reporting."

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