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Mahathir-Internet

INTERNET ASSAULTING VALUES OF THE YOUNG, SAYS MAHATHIR

PETALING JAYA, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the moral values of people especially the young are being assaulted through the Internet.

He said pornographic material could be accessed through the Internet, down-loaded and distributed with no known effective way of screening out these undesirable information.

Dr Mahathir said while some countries had tried without much success to make access to such things illegal, others said the society must develop a set of values which would make it resistant to the undermining of its morals.

"But can we really do this ? We now read of children raping other children. Teenagers now indulge in free sex and some heightened their thrills with violence against their victims and even murdering them," he said when opening the 12th Commonwealth Law Conference here.

Dr Mahathir said when society accepted that there was nothing it could do to check wild acts, then those who had otherwise kept their lusts under control would see no more need to control them.

"And when this happens, rapes and murders will become more and more common. Such is the effect of society's inability or unwillingness to prevent the abuse of information technology.

"It would seem that we cannot touch the right to free access to information because, like ownership of guns (in some countries), this has become a part of human rights," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said jet travel exposed people to the values and cultures of other people and sometimes, those from powerful countries wanted to impose their values and cultures on others.

"Don't people have any more rights to live their own way of life? Who protects them from the insidious propaganda aimed at changing them ?" he asked.

The prime minister said it did not speak well of the so-called tolerant modern civilisation if the ways and values of the victor were imposed on the defeated.

-- BERNAMA

MAM RYN