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Mahathir-Laws

LAWS IN MALAYSIA ENFORCED FAIRLY, SAYS DR M

PENAMPANG, Feb 18 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysians should not feel inferior with the country's judicial system because the laws are enforced on the basis of equal justice to all.

The prime minister said Malaysia's laws are no less just compared to other countries and in fact, could even be fairer as they are enforced irrespective of one's position.

"That's why, we in Malaysia should not feel inferior in terms of law enforcement.... in fact, we are more considerate, more responsible in enforcing the law," he said when launching the Sabah Native Affairs Council, here.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived this morning for a three-day visit to Sabah, said in enforcing the law, there should be no favouritism "although the person is our old friend or very close to us.

"When he does something (considered) wrong, he needs to be brought to the court to decide whether he is guilty or not," he said.

On the other hand, Dr Mahathir said, there were many instances in western countries where justice was not administered fairly although the countries were vocal in calling for an administration based on rule of law.

"When we do something fair, they straight away accuse us of being unjust as if we in the east do not care much for justice," he said.

Actually, they (western countries) were the ones who were unfair to their people because they practise favouritism based on skin colour and other factors when enforcing laws, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the principle of justice in western countries was meaningless because it was not justice that they valued but whether an issue was popular or unpopular among the people.

" We cannot blindly follow them. We need to return to our judicial system, and to our long-cherished values because our judicial system gave greater priority to justice than to the desires of any groups," he said.

On the Native Affairs Council, Dr Mahathir hoped it could resolve issues concerning the indigenous people in the state.

The council, which replaces the Bumiputera Affairs Unit, would be involved, among others, in supervising institutions dealing with native affairs including Native Courts.

While efforts to preserve the custom and traditions of the natives be continued, adjustments should be made from time to time to suit current needs, he added.

Also present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam and Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat.

After the launch, Dr Mahathir and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali proceeded to Dompok's residence at Masakazon Heights, near here.

-- BERNAMA

JS MAI TS