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Mahathir-Women

PAS' VIEW ON WOMEN HAS NO BASIS, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said PAS' claim that women should stay at home instead of working has no religious basis and is merely its own interpretation.

"Those who say that women cannot work are just expressing their opinion without basis from the religious point of view. It is just their own interpretation," he told reporters after chairing the Umno Supreme Council meeting here last night.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on a newspaper report quoting Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat as saying that the State PAS government would study the possibility of banning women from working.

The prime minister said Prophet Muhammad's wife herself was a trader and another wife of his even led an army in war.

He said Muslims who numbered around one billion worldwide would be weakened if women, who comprise about half this number, were prevented from contributing their energy and intellect.

Asked about the deadly Japanese Encephalitis (JE) disease, Dr Mahathir said the matter should not be politicised.

The government viewed the matter seriously and hoped that it would not be politicised by certain parties which were more interested in garnering support than showing concern for the people's plight, he said.

He said a task force headed by Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng had been formed to tackle the JE problem. It includes ministers and deputy ministers of the relevant ministries.

Dr Mahathir said the government would spend about RM49 million to vaccinate pigs and people and carry out fogging to contain the disease.

He said the government had no plans to compensate pig farmers affected by the disease but would give them the appropriate assistance.

-- BERNAMA

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