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Mahathir-Students

PM CRITICISES THE OPPOSITION FOR INCITING STUDENTS

GURUN, July 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed regret that the government's efforts to produce more Malays who are knowledgeable and well-versed in technology have been affected due to the action of political parties in instilling hatred for the government among students.

The prime minister said that the opposition parties had distracted the students from their studies, leading to their poor academic performance.

"As a result, Malay students can almost never be found to perform well to obtain Class One and Two because they have been incited to a point that they cannot study," he said when launching the new model of the national motorcycle, the BN175, also known as "Jaguh", at the Motosikal dan Enjin Nasional (Modenas) plant, here, today.

He criticised the opposition for giving priority to their own political interest instead of the academic achievements of the Malay students.

"They have no intention whatsoever to help promote academic excellence among the students, just to incite them for their own political interest," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that there had been cases of opposition leaders camping out at the campuses with students to carry out such activities.

"A lecturer, Sidek Fadzil, in teaching Islamic history, with sarcasm had likened the nation's leader to that of the Pharaoh. He had stated that I am the greatest of all Pharaohs," he said.

The prime minister said that they had incited the students to become ungrateful for the government's efforts in providing them education.

As a result of their incitement, the students participated in street protests and resorted to violence during such demonstrations instead of studying.

"To demonstrate, burning rubbish bins, kicking at motocars, people with no brains could do them. There is no need to go to the university," he said.

The prime minister said that the students were only wasting taxpayers' money by such actions.

This was because 90 per cent of the cost of study at the universities was borne by the government, he said.

"That is why the government has left politics out of the campuses so as not to disturb the students in their studies.

"The opposition parties, instead, teach the students not to be grateful to the government. It seems that it is our right...if others were to form the government, we will still enjoy the same benefits," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that students should not allow themselves to be instigated by the opposition parties which resorted to actions only for their own interest.

Speaking at a news conference later, Dr Mahathir said that the government would not take action against the lecturer concerned as it felt that the people could make their own assessment.

He said that the incitement of students had spread to all the universities especially the International Islamic University (IIU).

"The students will be at the losing end, especially those who are already weak in their studies. Due to such incitement, the students now have a closed mind," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the government could only advise the students and

could not make round the clock checks on opposition leaders camping out at the campuses and breaching university regulations.

Such activities at the campuses became even worse when lecturers themselves condone them, he said.

Replying to a question, the prime minister said that the people could determine for themselves whether or not the local media was credible.

-- BERNAMA

JM RM