

09 OCT 2000

Najib-Smear

DON'T INVITE FOREIGN MEDDLING IN COUNTRY'S AFFAIRS, SAYS NAJIB

LUMUT, Oct 9 (Bernama) -- Malaysians who have the country's interests at heart would not get foreigners to interfere in its internal affairs, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

"Instead, any political differences should be left to the people to resolve according to our country's democratic process," he said today.

"They have gone to the extent of bringing their politics to the international stage to smear the good name of the PM and the country's image," he told a news conference after opening a seminar on defence and national security here.

He said this when asked to comment on the action of certain opposition parties and non-governmental organisations in resorting to smearing the image of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad overseas.

"Actually, if they are citizens concerned about the country's integrity, they should not get others to interfere in our country's internal affairs," he said.

He said Malaysians should not do anything which could undermine the country's image when they were overseas, like spreading false and negative news for their own political gains.

"This will invite disapproval from certain quarters overseas towards our country," Najib said.

Najib said the government had to step up efforts to counter such smear campaigns, including enlightening Malaysian students overseas of the actual situation and giving its side of the story at international forums.

The government had decided to set up permanent delegations to meet Malaysian students overseas to spend more time briefing the identified groups, he said.

"With this, it is hoped that our students overseas will get news and information as clearly as possible," he said.

-- BERNAMA

HK YBY