

20 OCT 2001

Najib-Chemical

DO NOT BE ALARMED OVER REPORTS OF ANTHRAX FINDING- NAJIB

SUNGAI PETANI, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- People should not be worried over reports of letters containing anthrax being found in Malaysia because it is merely false alarm, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

Malaysia had not reached the stage where it could become a target of chemical weapon attacks by groups including terrorists, he said.

"Up to this point, reports of such letters being received are only false alarm. Hence people should not panic. Carry on with your activities as usual without any fear of chemical weapon attacks," he said.

"Our country has not yet reached the level when it can become a place for terrorists to attack using chemical weapons," Najib, who is Umno Vice President, told reporters after receiving new membership application report here.

Najib said from the aspect of the ability to face chemical attacks, Malaysia had indeed limited capacity.

Still the Government was monitoring the situation closely in light of the anthrax reports.

Najib also said Malaysia's intelligence gathering capacity should be upgraded to enable the country to face modern era warfare such as the threat from international terrorists.

He said cooperation from all sectors in the country was necessary to counter terrorism.

"For instance in the United States, the Pentagon (US Defence Department) needs the cooperation of the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigations), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as well as the help of other nations.... with a view to pooling the resources in facing threats from terrorists," he said.

He said the Malaysian Government would never compromise with elements that endangered national security.

The recent action against members of the Kumpulan Militan Malaysia (KMM) was an example of that uncompromising stand, he added.

"If the government had not taken early action, groups such as the KMM could have undermined national security resulting in the deaths of many people," Najib said.

On the allocation for the Defence Ministry in next year's Budget tabled by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Najib said his ministry was satisfied with the amount particularly the RM370 million for armed forces personnel housing needs.

New Umno members in Kedah totalled 21,743 including 8,411 who joined Puteri Umno.

-- BERNAMA

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