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Mahathir-Sad

DR MAHATHIR EXPRESSES SORROW OVER MURDER OF NURUL HANIS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 5 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed profound sorrow over the rape and murder of a 16-year-old schoolgirl in Merlimau, Melaka, on Tuesday.

"I feel so unhappy and saddened over the many such cases taking place these days," he said.

Nurul Hanis Kamil, a Form Four student, was found dead and raped in some bushes near her house at Serkam Darat, Merlimau. A newspaper today reported that a youth had been arrested in connection with the case but police have yet to confirm it.

The Prime Minister said this shocking and immoral crime was perhaps the consequence of the free way of life of present day society particularly the young.

Compared to the past, children's movements nowadays were difficult to control, Dr Mahathir said.

"We find that present day society has too much freedom. In the past our parents exercised some control over us but nowadays we find there is freedom everywhere. What the children are doing sometimes even the parents or teachers are not aware of," he told reporters after attending a dialogue with participants of Science Convention 2001 at Seri Kembangan here.

"Morals nowadays have collapsed, not as good as before," he said shaking his head in dismay.

During the dialogue session, the Prime Minister also expressed regret that many social and criminal cases involved Malays.

"Not attending school, not attending lectures, crime, drugs.....I do not know why."

He said these things could be overcome if noble values were stressed in the religious curriculum in schools.

The Prime Minister said a person could resist falling prey to evil by building inner strength.

"If the person develops a strong spirit and personal character he can restrain himself from committing wicked things," he added.

Meanwhile, Women and Family Development Minister Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's office expressed sadness over the murder and urged the authorities to take fast and firm action to bring to book the culprit or culprits behind the despicable crime.

"We cannot allow such tragedies to continue. Almost every day the newspapers carry reports of girls being raped, whether by people known to them or by strangers," it said in a statement today.

The people should not regard such incidents as a normal occurrence, it said.

"Firm steps should be taken by every member of society to ensure the safety of our children. Their well-being and safety are our joint responsibility," the statement said.

It said the people should be wary of strangers loitering in their areas while the authorities, especially the police, should view seriously all reports on such matters.

-- BERNAMA

MAM AFY RON AAM