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Abdullah-Afghanistan

MALAYSIAN STUDENTS WENT TO AFGHANISTAN ON THEIR OWN, SAYS DPM

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today that Malaysians who were trained by the Taliban were students who went to Afghanistan on their own or may have been sent there by certain non-governmental organisations.

He said that so far Malaysia does not have a mechanism to monitor the activities of Malaysian students in Afghanistan as it does not have a students' department like in some other countries where Malaysian students are pursuing their studies.

The government, he said, never had any programme whereby students were sent to pursue further studies in Afghanistan.

Malaysian students pursuing further studies in Islamic countries were sent to Egypt and other West Asian countries, he told reporters after launching an exerobics under a people-friendly programme organised by the Royal Malaysia Police at Taman Tasik Titiwangsa here.

He was asked to comment on a statement by the Afghanistan ambassador to Malaysia Abdul Sattar Murad yesterday that the Taliban provided training to Malaysian students who initially went to Pakistan to pursue their studies.

Asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's confirmation that Malaysia was an Islamic country at the 30th Gerakan delegates' conference yesterday, Abdullah said the form of administration in the country was similar to that practised by other Islamic countries.

"In terms of development and our legal system and our administration, these elements are also practised in other Islamic countries," he said.

Abdullah said that based on the existing system, the country also promotes rapid progress for the Muslim community to excel in all aspects of life.

At the same time, he said, the good governance of the present government was also readily accepted by the non-Muslims in the country.

"I believe the people will be able to understand that measures we have taken for the development of the country, the people and the Muslims are not things that deny them the right to become good Muslims," he said.

The deputy prime minister said that the acceptance of the non-Muslims could clearly be seen in their direct participation in various Islamic-based institutions like Islamic banking.

He said that in efforts to set up such institutions which could benefit both the Muslims and non-Muslims, the nation's peace and security would also be ensured in the country.

Abdullah, who is Home Minister, said that the people-friendly programme organised by the police force should become a regular event to further enhance closer ties between the police force and the community.

He also hoped that the programme would be conducted in other places.

-- BERNAMA

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