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Mahathir-Chinese

MALAYSIA MUCH MORE LIBERAL TO CHINESE THAN OTHER COUNTRIES

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Chinese should reflect on the good living conditions they enjoy compared to those of other Chinese communities in so-called liberal countries of the West, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The prime minister said this was because Malaysia was the only country in the world which allowed the community to have, among others, Chinese schools and to practise their own language.

"We notice that in other countries, including developed countries which are very liberal, they do not have such schools. So we are much more liberal than most of these countries which talk about our lack of consideration for other races," he told a media conference at the end of the three-day Umno general assembly here.

He said the Chinese in Australia and America, for example, should be allowed to have their own schools, practise their own language and everything else that the Chinese community in Malaysia enjoyed.

The Umno president was asked to comment on his stern warning to certain sections of the local Chinese media against trying to instigate the Chinese community into hating him and the Barisan Nasional (BN) government by playing on community-related issues.

Dr Mahathir issued the reminder in his winding-up speech at the annual Umno gathering, which saw him touching on the controversy over the purchase of two Chinese dailies, Nanyang Siang Pau and China Press, by the investment arm of MCA.

He had said that the two dailies published stories which were biased and more supportive of the opposition.

"The Chinese media is trying to drag me into this controversy of the purchase of Nanyang (Press Holdings Bhd, publisher of the two dailies)," he said.

To a question, Dr Mahathir reiterated that there was an obvious attempt by certain parties to make use of and create hatred of him among the Chinese community.

He said this was the same technique used during the controversy surrounding the Vision School concept and the issue of Malay rights.

"When I condemned the Suqiu (over the Malay rights issue), again they tried to make it an issue as if I hate the Chinese.

"Because the DAP lost in the last election (when) the Chinese rejected the DAP, since then they have been trying their best to create hatred on the part of the Chinese against the government," he said.

He also said that the government would continue with the policy of having vernacular schools.

-- BERNAMA

MAM AZZ YBY