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Mahathir-Nuclear

NO NUCLEAR POWER FOR MALAYSIA, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 12 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reiterated today that Malaysia will not indulge in the use of nuclear power and that the country hopes other countries in the world will not build new nuclear power plants.

"Nuclear power is like a malevolent genie which once released from the bottle cannot be tamed and put back again (into the bottle). I frankly do not trust nuclear power," he said.

He pointed out that the knowledge of its use and nuclear engineering expertise was still very primitive as there had been far too many accidents involving nuclear power plants.

"We know that having released the power of nuclear fusion we seem quite unable to stop it. We try to contain it within layers and layers of cement and lead and other materials but Chernobyl (the nuclear power plant disaster in Russia) is still emitting harmful particles which are disseminated over a very wide area," he said at a luncheon address held in conjunction with the Asia Oil and Gas conference 2001, here.

He said the world does not know how much damage can be caused to how big an area nor for how long this disastrous use of nuclear power would continue.

"And we see nuclear submarines and ships plying the seas and they had been known to meet with accidents and to sink. God forbid that the arsenals of nuclear warheads should ever be fired at anyone, as we do not know whether they can be defused, decommissioned or rendered harmless," he added.

He said Malaysia, on the other hand, preferred to look into the use of hydrogen and fuel cells.

"These hold the biggest promise and governments as well as the private sector must allocate more funds and manpower to perfect hydrogen engine and the efficiency of fuel cells," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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