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PM: Government has proof of Nik Adli's involvement in movement

LUMUT, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today confirmed that Kelantan Menteri Besar's son Nik Adli Nik Aziz was involved with a militant movement which was trying to topple the Government by force.

He said the Government had proof of this and that was why he was arrested under the Internal Security Act.

However, he said the Government was not yet certain the extent of his involvement but knew for certain that he was a member of the Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia, a militant movement.

Dr Mahathir said the matter was still being investigated and added that he did not think Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat was aware of his son's involvement and the movement's intention to topple the Government.

The Prime Minister was responding to a statement by Nik Aziz yesterday saying that his son had gone to Afghanistan while he was a student in Pakistan.

He was speaking to reporters after visiting the PSC Naval Dockyard Sdn Bhd at the Royal Malaysian Navy base here.

Nik Aziz said as Muslims, it was compulsory to help other Muslims and even America at that time was providing weapons to the Mujahidin to fight the Russians.

Nik Adli was among 10 people arrested in the past few days under the ISA for alleged involvement in the militant movement. Members of the group are believed to have been trained in Afghanistan in mountain warfare tactics commonly employed by guerilla fighters.

The group activities came to light after the botched Southern Bank robbery in Jalan Gasing, Petaling Jaya, on May 18.

On the involvement of religious teachers in the movement, Dr Mahathir said the Government did not focus on any one person but that anybody could be involved in the movement.

"For example, one of the men arrested is just a penjual kuih (seller of Malay kuih). He looked innocent enough but actually he is involved in the movement.

"To our surprise it was also discovered that he knew how to make and detonate bombs."

Dr Mahathir said before the existence of the group, attempts to bomb certain places or attack police stations were unheard of.

But now, he said, such cases were on the rise. These included the murder of a Barisan Nasional MP for Lunas Dr Joe Fernandez.

Dr Mahathir said the Opposition would continue to say the Government's motive in using the ISA was politically motivated, but the Opposition was not responsible in safeguarding national security.

"They can say what they like. If we are politically motivated we will arrest the real leaders such as Nik Aziz, Hadi Awang (Terengganu Menteri Besar) and Lim Kit Siang.

"But we did not. Instead we only arrested those responsible in causing chaos," he said.

Dr Mahathir, however warned the Opposition that the Government would not hesitate to arrest them if there was proof that they planned to create unrest in the country.

On the arrest of a commando suspected of being involved in robbing

RM29,000 from a bank in Rawang last Friday, Dr Mahathir said it could happen because although he was a member of the armed forces, he was also human.

"And as humans they are easily influenced by external forces especially when they feel they are adept at handling weapons and that by using them it could bring them wealth."

Earlier when addressing RMN personnel in conjunction with his one-day visit to the naval base, Dr Mahathir said preventive laws like the ISA were necessary to ensure prevailing peace and prosperity in the country.

He said despite criticisms from certain nations that Malaysia was undemocratic and unfair for having such laws, the Government found that they were still relevant.

"Prevention is certainly better than cure.

"Similarly, if we want to maintain peace, we cannot wait for a riot to take place."

"We have to prevent it from happening. If we want to take action only after the event, it will be too late."

The people have nothing to fear as the Government does not simply arrest just anybody.

He said Israel's recent attack on Palestinians whom they claimed would launch an attack against the country, was proof that it believed in taking preventive measures.

"Israel does not arrest Palestinians whom they claimed would be organising an attack on the country but fired rockets from a helicopter.

"Israel killed the Palestinians even before they did anything," he said.

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