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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO WILL CLOSE ITS CLUBS IF IT IS AGAINST THE LAW, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

JAKARTA, May 31 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Umno will close its clubs overseas if it is against the law of countries concerned.

He said Umno would always uphold the rule of law and abide with the law that disallowed the setting up of such a club, such as in universities where students were not allowed to be involved in politics.

"My only concern is that when other people come to instigate the students to hate people like me," said the Prime Minister when fielding a question from a student during a dialogue session with the Malaysian community at the Malaysian embassy, here this evening.

Also present were his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Foreign Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar and Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Rastam Mohd Isa.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, urged the Malaysian community here especially students to interact with the local population and try to understand their culture which differed from theirs.

Although there were certain elements, unsuitable to be emulated, there were many such as good values and customs that they could put to good use on their return, he said.

He regretted that some students who were sent overseas still preferred to interact among their own kinds, so much so that they were ignorant of the culture of the community in which they lived in.

Dr Mahathir also said Malaysia were enjoying peace and its economy was continuing to grow where last year the growth was 8.5 per cent.

But this year, he said the economic growth was slightly less and this was not due to internal factors but the effect of the economic slowdown in the United States.

"The United States is the biggest importers of Malaysian goods in particular electronic products. Since it has reduced imports of such goods, our economy is also affected," he said.

On politics, he admitted of a split among the Malays, which was bad since the Malays were the dominating political force and would certainly have an effect on the country's politics.

"As such, we have initiated talks to re-unite the Malays but certain people were simply not interested," he said.

--BERNAMA

OPP NZ ABG