

15 OCT 2001

Hishammuddin-Anthrax

UMNO YOUTH CLAIMS US STATEMENT ON ANTHRAX SHALLOW

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 15 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth today told the western media to refrain from exaggerating the issue on the letter claimed to have been contaminated with anthrax and said to have been sent from Malaysia to the United States (US) to the extent that it could tarnish Malaysia's image and reputation.

The movement's head Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said Umno Youth hoped the western media, especially CNN, would not exaggerate the issue with the aim of shifting world attention from the American attacks on Afghanistan.

An unbalanced report could confuse the perception of the international community towards Malaysia which had been "proven to be a nation of peace and harmony", he said in a statement released by the movement today.

The report from the US quoted officials as confirming that tests carried out on the letter proved positive of the presence of the deadly bacteria.

Hishammuddin is now in Japan on an eight-day tour from Oct 10 at the invitation of the Japanese government.

"Malaysia's stand on the American attacks is very clear, that is, the attacks on Afghanistan will not resolve the matter on terrorism," he said.

Meanwhile, in Japan, Hishammuddin held meetings with the Economic, Trade and Industry Minister Takeo Hiranuma, Senior Vice Foreign Minister Seiken Sugiura, LDP Parliamentary Association Chairman for Motorsports Promotion Seishiro Eto, Economic, Trade and Industry Vice-Minister Keiji Furuya and LDP acting secretary-general Nobutaka Machimura.

In another development, Hishammuddin also said Umno Youth was proud of the appointment of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as head in the efforts to tackle terrorism by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

-- BERNAMA

HK AHH AO