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Mahathir-Universities

UNDERGRADUATES INVOLVED IN ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO BE EXPELLED

LANGKAWI, July 8 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that undergraduates found involved in anti-government activities in future will be expelled from university.

"If they do not concentrate on their studies, they will be removed from university," he told reporters after observing development projects here.

Such a condition would be enforced in view of the large number of students especially Malay undergraduates involved in anti-government activities, he said.

"I'm most saddened, it seems Malay students...there is no problem with the other students...are making universities the ground for their political involvement focused on anti-government activities," he said when asked to comment on such activities which were becoming aggressive of late in the universities.

Dr Mahathir said he found that their activities were becoming bold and at times they acted beyond limit and threatened national security.

Last Friday, the police arrested Universiti Malaya Students Representative Council president Mohamad Fuad Ikhwan under the Internal Security Act for his alleged involvement in activities which threaten national security. Earlier, student activist Khairul Anwar Ahmad Zainuddin of Institut Kemahiran Mara was also arrested under the ISA.

Dr Mahathir said that in future, only those who wish to study would be selected for entry to universities and not those who focus their attention on activities which were not beneficial.

"Maybe in future, we will select those for entry into universities among those who wish to study and if their activities are found to be unrelated to their studies, they will be removed," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that it was meaningless for the government to spend huge sums of money for them if they do not have any consideration at all for the government.

Instead, he said, they regard universities as a centre to mobilise students merely to oppose the government.

"As such, what is the point in spending large sums of money if they do not wish to study," he said.

Asked regarding the 2002 Budget, Dr Mahathir who is Finance Minister said it would place emphasis on efforts to increase local investments to promote economic growth.

He said that the government cannot depend on foreign investments as the volume now was smaller and mostly concentrated on China which was much cheaper.

The government, he said, had identified various manufacturing sectors which could be developed.

Asked whether the 2002 Budget would be a people's budget or a corporate budget, Dr Mahathir said: "...for sure it is for the nation's development to benefit the people."

-- BERNAMA

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