

17/07/2001

Warning to Negri sponsored undergrads

SEREMBAN, Mon. - Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad today warned undergraduates sponsored by the State Government, via the Negri Sembilan Foundation, not to be involved in political activities or risk having their scholarships or loans withdrawn with immediate effect.

Although no such action had been taken so far, Mohamad Isa said student councils at all universities had been asked to liaise with the State Government in identifying student activists.

"We will not hesitate to take away all the benefits accorded to them if they are involved. We will never compromise with such students," the Menteri Besar said, adding that they must abide by the conditions laid down in their agreement with the foundation.

"As the next echelon of leaders they are supposed to study hard and not be involved in activities not related to their studies."

Mohamad Isa said political tendency among students, especially the Malays, "has reached a dangerous level that they no longer bother about going against the Government who has been providing them with all the facilities and privileges all these years".

The Menteri Besar was commenting on the move by the Government to conduct a study to determine whether it was necessary to amend the Universities and University Colleges Act to deter students from engaging in such activities.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said any amendment would only take place if efforts to impose stricter rules and regulations at universities proved insufficient.

The Prime Minister said such action was needed as the Government wanted to ensure that public funds allocated for education were not misused.

Describing the move as timely and appropriate, Mohamad Isa said there should be binding agreement and condition laid down for both university students and lecturers to ensure that they always "toe the line".

He said the Government must be firm even though there might be protests from certain quarters.

He added that students found using the universities' facilities for such activities should be expelled.

(END)