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Mahathir-Terrorism

CLAIMS THAT SEA IS PROTECTING TERRORISTS ARE HALF TRUTHS- DR M

PUTRAJAYA, Nov 14 (Bernama) - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today described allegations that Southeast Asian countries are protecting terrorists as "half truths".

While not denying that there were terrorist activities in the region, he said Malaysia was "very cautious".

"We have taken action to put a stop to these activities. We have the Internal Security Act (ISA). We can detain people if we have evidence that the activities are detrimental to the security of the country," he told a gathering of 31 members of the Japan National Press Club here.

"We know these people are capable of violence, and we have to stop them from carrying out their plans. We can see how they can cause tremendous damage in Indonesia," he said.

The Prime Minister said the government detected these activities very early and had been able to prevent things happening.

"We are generally more stable and we maintain that Malaysia is a safe country," he said.

"We should not be categorised as a risky country not to be visited by tourists. All races live together harmoniously, we have no racial problems. Of course we have minor disputes that can be settled," he said.

Responding to questions on the economy, he said the country was doing reasonably well despite the downturn throughout the world.

"We can continue the recovery into the next year. We should have performed much better, but there was the downturn in the US. This year will be better and next year will be better still," he added.

-- BERNAMA

ANA AZH AAM