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Mahathir-Majority

POLICY ON MAJORITY SHARE OWNERSHIP REMAINS, SAYS DR M

By: Muin Abdul Majid

BERLIN, March 21 (Bernama) -- The government does not intend to change its policy on majority share ownership in strategic industries. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Wednesday.

However, the government was prepared to consider on a case-by-case basis if there are applications for that, he said.

"We've no plans to change now but we need to study. For instance, in the MSC (Multimedia Super Corridor), we have relaxed a lot as it is a different industry than others.

"If there's a need, we'll consider on a case-by-case," he told Malaysian journalists at the end of his three-day official visit to Germany.

Dr Mahathir and his delegation left for Poland Thursday morning for a two-day visit.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, was asked to comment on majority share ownership raised at a dialogue with German businessmen in Munich.

Dr Mahathir, who met German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder, said he took the opportunity to explain Malaysia's stand on various matters, including terrorism, Afghanistan conflict, developments in West Asia, Japan and Indonesia.

"On terrorism, I explained our stand and the actions we have taken in our country. I also explained the reasons for terrorism to be tackled, including the Palestinian problem," he said.

On collaboration in education with Germany, Dr Mahathir said German institutions of higher learning are invited to open branches in Malaysia or have twinning programmes with local universities.

He said: "We feel that since they teach in English, they can team up with any institution in Malaysia using English as the medium of instruction."

Dr Mahathir said the government would find ways on how Malaysian students could fully utilise education opportunities in Germany as universities here do not charge tuition fees.

He said Schroder suggested that German companies in Malaysia set up vocational training institutes to upgrade the skills of locals.

Dr Mahathir said the German leader was also supportive of collaborations in the information technology and communication sectors.

On tourism, Dr Mahathir said Kuala Lumpur was keen to have cultural exchanges with Berlin to boost tourism promotion and woo more German tourists to Malaysia.

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