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Mahathir-Ties

MAHATHIR RAPS VARSITIES THAT ARE INDIFFERENT TO RACIAL TIES AMONG STUDENTS

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today criticised some university managements that do not make efforts to foster racial ties among students in their institutions.

The prime minister said that there were even university staff who caused a strain in the relationship among the students of different races.

"There are people working in the universities who not only don't promote racial ties but do things that cause the races to gradually segregate themselves," he told reporters after launching Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar), here.

He was asked to elaborate on his speech at the launch which, among others, touched on the need for pro-active efforts to promote racial ties among the university students to prevent the growing trend of an adult Malaysian society with racial prejudice.

Asked whether the problem of racial segregation in the universities was serious, he said: "It's deteriorating. Actually we should be getting closer with time.

"We tried with the national education system but clearly it failed because of certain people who slant the policies. Now, we find the racial divide wider than previously," he said

He said that the reasons used to strain the ties among the undergraduates ranged from religion to the way of dressing.

"We (government) want to control (such situation) but in the universities there are people who purposely do things different from the government policies. We try to bring all the races closer together (but) they try to segregate the races through various means," he said.

The prime minister was also asked to comment on PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang's statement yesterday that the use of English in the teaching of Science and Mathematics in schools was done in haste and was undemocratic.

"When we want to do something good PAS is sure to politicise the matter and betray all our good intentions. That's PAS's work. PAS will oppose and incite the people to oppose," he said.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that there was no political motive behind the government's move.

"It is not political. It is not intended to undermine the culture or the identity of the different communities in Malaysia. It is simply because we have to acknowledge that English is the language of learning today just like Arabic and Latin in the past," he added.

On differences within the Barisan Nasional on the issue, he expressed confidence that these could be resolved.

"We can settle this in our own way. We have settled worse problems than this," Dr Mahathir said.

On another matter, the prime minister said the federal government would take action against the PAS government in Terengganu if it broke any law with regard to the implementation of its version of hudud laws.

"If they do something that is not provided for in the Constitution which governs the whole nation, then of course we cannot work or cooperate with them and we may have to take action against them if they break the law," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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