

19 MAR 2002

Parliament-debate

UNIVERSITIES SHOULD KEEP TABS ON ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

KUALA LUMPUR, March 19 (Bernama) -- Universities should keep tabs on the activities of students to ensure that they will not be involved in unhealthy activities, the Dewan Rakyat was told today.

Mastika Junaidah Husin (BN-Arau) said universities should also take firm action and not to allow the students to be used as tools by any political party.

"I feel very sorry for the students," she said, recalling a case during the Indera Kayangan state by-election in Perlis last January where Barisan Nasional (BN) workers caught three Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and four Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) for spying for the opposition.

Speaking during the debate on the motion of thanks for the royal address, Mastika wanted the outcome of the investigation into claim by the students that they were directed by PAS leaders to be made public.

Meanwhile, another backbencher Chang See Teng (BN-Gelang Patah) wanted UTM to explain why Dewan Sultan Iskandar could not be used for activities other than academic.

He cited a recent case where the university had refused to allow the hall to be used as a venue for a cultural exposition organised in conjunction with the Chinese New Year on the excuse that the hall was only for academic activities.

"In my opinion, facilities in public institutions of higher learning should be put to optimum use to avoid wastage," he said.

Chang said he saw no reason why the hall could not be used for other activities of benefit to the campus population when no academic activities were taking place.

He feared that such action could lead to anti-government sentiment a section of the students.

Ronald Kiandee (BN-Beluran) in his speech urged the Education Ministry to take immediate steps to monitor activities of Malaysian students overseas to prevent them from indulging in undesirable activities.

He said some students had indulged in such activities and if no steps were taken their number could grow.

Meanwhile, Jacob Dungau Sagan (BN-Baram) wanted the government to help certain ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak.

He said these groups had been left in terms of development, not that the government had neglected them.

"They cannot take advantage of opportunities provided by the government because they live far in the interior," he said.

He said that although many of them owned vast tracts of land, they were still poor as the land could not be developed.

Rural Development Ministry through its agencies such as Felcra and Felda could play a meaningful role by helping these groups to develop their land.

Chong Eng (DAP-Bukit Mertajam) in her speech called for the setting up of a special committee to help Women and Family Development Ministry to implement specific policies relating to women's development.

She said that currently the implementation was too slow as the ministry did not have sufficient manpower.

In addition to that, many of those involved in the implementation of policies were not skilled in matters on women's issues, resulting in the policies failing to achieve their objectives, she said.

Datuk Mohd Sarit Yusof (BN-Temerloh) meanwhile said the time had come for the international community to review U.S. hegemony of might is always right.

He said the international community should reconsider the theory of power-sharing more so in tackling critical issues such as terrorism.

"The international community should support call by Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) to Russia to strengthen its position to counter balance the power in global politics," he said.

Madius bin Tangau (BN-Tuaran) on the other hand wanted the authorities to investigate rampant cases of forged identity cards in Sabah.

He also wanted to know the number of foreigners who had applied to become Malaysian citizens and the number of those who had been issued with identity cards.

-- BERNAMA

HS HS ABG