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Zainudin-English

DR M'S STATEMENT ON ENGLISH WILL PUT TO REST PREJUDICE, SAYS ZAM

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 29 (Bernama) -- The statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that there was no need to teach other subjects in English except Science and Mathematics will put to rest any prejudice on the policy of Bahasa Malaysia as the national and official language of the country, Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainudin Maidin said today.

He said the move to teach the two subjects in English had been misconstrued by certain quarters to that of erasing the status of the national language.

Dr Mahathir made the statement in an interview in "The Asian Wall Street Journal" programme broadcast by the CNBC TV last night.

Zainudin said the interview clearly showed that the Barisan Nasional (BN) firmly held to the national language policy.

"It also showed that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir had never lost his sense of direction as a Malaysian nationalist," he said.

Zainudin said the "Anglophile" group understood the rationale of the government's decision but tried to portray a picture as though the government would revert to the education policy of the British colonialists which disregarded Bahasa Malaysia.

He said the government's move to teach Science and Mathematics in English was because "we cannot catch up with the advancement of English in the two fields by merely depending on translated books and materials."

"In fact, in Malaysia, the institutions responsible for this are not proactive and are conservative and cannot produce translated books of global information, especially from western thinkers.

"If positive steps are not taken by the government in the teaching of Science and Mathematics, Malaysians will be left far behind, not only from the western world but also from Singapore, Japan and South Korea," he said.

He said comparing Japan and South Korea in the context of language development was illogical because the Malays have not attain the level of a technology inventor race like Japanese and South Koreans.

-- BERNAMA

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