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ABDULLAH-JEWS

ABDULLAH CONFIDENT INVESTORS WILL STILL CHOOSE M'SIA

BANGI, Oct 23 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is confident that foreign investors will still come to Malaysia despite the call by a leading US-based Jewish lobby group for investors and tourists to boycott Malaysia.

The group, Simon Wiesenthal Centre, was reported to have launched a scathing counter attack on Dr Mahathir following his speech at the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) recently accusing the Jews of ruling the world by proxy.

Abdullah said that entrepreneurs invested in a country based on several factors like security, peace and a stable economy.

"We have all these factors. So we do not have to worry. It is their right to take such a stand," he said at a press conference after closing a national level seminar in Islamic Thinking, here today.

He added: But we are disappointed with the way they respond. We will still continue to develop our country.

"I am confident that companies and investors who are already in our country will continue to remain here and those wanting to invest will (continue to) come."

"I know that investors come because they want to gain profits from their investments in a country which is safe and peaceful," he said.

Abdullah said that Malaysia would continue to face various challenges and it would be up to the rakyat to know what to do in order to look after the country's interest.

Asked whether the call made by the centre, which has 400,000 members, was beyond the limit as it was based on Dr Mahathir's speech which was misunderstood, Abdullah said:

"I see it as an unreasonable action as they have interpreted (the speech) out of context," he said.

Dr Mahathir's speech at the opening of the 10th OIC Summit in Putrajaya last week drew sharp criticism from Western and Israeli leaders with some branding him as anti-semitic, including the Simon Wiesenthal Centre.

In an interview with Thai newspaper the "Bangkok Post," the Prime Minister was reported as saying that the world's reaction (on his speech) showed in actual fact that the Jews rule the world and are arrogant so much so they sidelined the international community stance.

On the allegation of threats against Malaysians overseas from groups not happy with Dr Mahathir's statement, Abdullah said that the government would ensure that all Malaysians are safe.

However, the Deputy Prime Minister said that he had yet to receive any such reports from Wisma Putra.

"I have not received any reports on the matter. If it has reached that stage, (Foreign Minister Datuk Seri) Syed Hamid (Albar) will inform me," he said.

Earlier, in his speech, Abdullah said that the policies implemented by the government had brought about development not only to the Muslims but also to non-Muslims in Malaysia.

He said that no one could dispute that the country's development has empowered the Muslims, including through education and the stress on science and technology.

Abdullah said that Malaysia was able to contribute to the development of Islamic countries due to the capability of its rakyat, like Petronas'

involvement in oil exploration in Africa.

The seminar was organised jointly by the Office of Religious Adviser to the Prime Minister, Special Functions Department (Information Ministry) and DRB-Hicom Bhd. -- BERNAMA

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