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Mahathir-VCDS

PM WANTS POLICE TO CONTINUE CRACKDOWN ON PIRATED, PORNOGRAPHIC VCDS

PUTRAJAYA, June 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told the police today not to let up in efforts to combat the scourge of pirated and pornographic video compact discs (VCDs).

"This is a continuous thing. The moment you relax it will come back, so the police will be asked to continue with their action all the time," Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, said when asked to comment on the crackdown on such items, with the police declaring their two-week nationwide operations to stop their distribution a success.

He was speaking to reporters after chairing the third session of the Budget 2004 Dialogue at the Finance Ministry here.

Dr Mahathir also appealed to the public to provide information on such illegal activity so that action could be taken.

"Sometimes there are information that we need in order to take action. If the information is provided, we will take action," he said.

The operations were conducted following concern voiced by Dr Mahathir himself over the blatant distribution and retailing of illegal and smut VCDs in the country.

Police as well as enforcement officers from the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry and local councils reportedly seized VCDs worth millions of ringgit during the May 26 to June 8 operations.

Meanwhile, the prime minister was also asked on the performance of local councils which have come under fire lately.

To this, he said: "We will have to look into this because there have been a lot of complaints against the local councils."

Dr Mahathir did not rule out the possibility that those non-performing representatives would be replaced.

"Because some representatives want to be popular, do not want to collect taxes while others are not providing proper service," he said.

Asked on why, more often than not, it took the prime minister himself to spur police and enforcement officers into action, Dr Mahathir said: "That is (an) activity (which) I have to carry out."

"You can't ask somebody to direct somebody who is a very senior officer. It must be directed by a person who is very senior."

When pointed out that there were ministers who were supposed to be in charge, he said: "Yes, but we discuss this in the Cabinet. It is a collective decision."

-- BERNAMA

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