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Najib-America

TRAVEL ADVISORY AGAINST M'ISIA NOT BASED ON TRUE PICTURE, SAYS NAJIB

PARIT, May 17 (Bernama) -- The United States' travel warning against Malaysia was not based on the actual security situation in the country, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today.

"I cannot see any reason why they must come out with such warning," he said when commenting on the US travel advisory issued against Malaysia last Wednesday.

"If they meant terrorist attacks then the risk can be anywhere. The fact is that security risk in Malaysia is much lower when compared to that in developed nations like European countries or US itself."

He told reporters this after closing a Puteri Umno community programme at Sekolah Kebangsaan Teluk Kepayang, Bota Kiri, near here.

Najib, who is the Umno vice-president, said Malaysia had taken steps to deal with threats posed from terrorism, long before the Sept 11, 2001 attack in the US.

He said the Malaysian authorities had taken swift action like arresting members of militant and extremist groups, crippling these movements to ensure that they cannot launch any acts of terrorism in the country.

"We deploy more security units to safeguard Sabah when threats from the Abu Sayyaf emerged from southern Philippines," he said.

Najib said there was sufficient number of security personnel patrolling the waters off Sabah, hence tourists to island resorts like Sipadan should not be concerned with security there.

Meanwhile in PENANG, when commenting on the same issue, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said the US had a hidden agenda when it issued the travel advisory.

"The US travel advisory appears to have another agenda apart from that on security," he told reporters after opening the TV3 Carnival 2003 at Sungai Nibong carnival site.

Dr Koh said Malaysia had a good track record in maintaining security and had been successful in dealing with terrorism-related issues.

Meanwhile social activist Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said the move by US to warn its nationals against visiting Malaysia as politically-motivated.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad described the US as being scared of its own shadow as a result of its cruel actions.

-- BERNAMA

NER ZUL