

16 MAY 2003
Mahathir-US
US AFRAID OF ITS OWN SHADOW, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KENINGAU, May 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the United States issued the advisory warning its citizens against visiting Malaysia especially Sabah because it is afraid of its own shadow as a result of its cruel actions.

Dr Mahathir said that the country especially Sabah was actually enjoying peace and security with the situation under control and there were no riots.

"On my arrival here, I see peace and security, there're no riots. But today we read in the newspapers that in Malaysia, especially in Sabah, there're terrorists planning to explode bombs to kill their (US) citizens," he said when opening the Eighth Congress of Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) at the community hall here.

Dr Mahathir, who is Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said that the move taken by the US was like "tyrants in fear, like (deposed Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein who're afraid of his own people."

Washington issued a warning last Wednesday that terrorists linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network may be planning new attacks on US citizens and interests in Malaysia, particularly in Sabah.

The US State Department's travel advisory stated that US citizens travelling to the islands and in the coastal areas of eastern Sabah have to be aware of the persistence of threats from the Abu Sayyaf Group based in the southern Philippines, and should exercise extreme caution.

"Jemaah Islamiyah and other extremist groups present in the region have demonstrated transnational capabilities to carry out attacks against locations where Westerners congregate," the statement said.

The advisory was issued in the wake of Monday's deadly bombings in Saudi Arabia where at least 25 people, including eight Americans were killed when suicide bombers set off three blasts almost simultaneously at compounds housing Westerners in the Saudi capital of Riyadh.

Dr Mahathir said: "We're all able to gather like this at the PBRS Congress without fear of any threats. But according to the CNN, the US states that Sabah is a terrorist haven. As such, (Washington) advises its citizens not to come here.

"This is because they (US) felt guilty as they have committed all sorts of actions like killing and oppressing others, and as such, they're afraid of their own shadow, afraid to come here, afraid because they know there're many people in this world hating them."

The Prime Minister said that Malaysians do not hate the Americans but they were still afraid because of their guilt in invading another country, of oppression, and supporting Israel and was hurling accusations that these countries were planning to kill them and even Malaysians had intentions to kill its citizens.

Dr Mahathir gave an assurance that the Americans were safe in the country.

"We have security forces adequate enough to maintain peace and security in the country," he said.

Dr Mahathir likened the fear of the US like that experienced by Saddam who was afraid to venture out of his palace and was protected by his bodyguards because of his tyrannical actions against his own people.

He said that the US had also been cruel against many innocent people in this world and as a result of their actions, they were in fear and would

pay for the cruelty they had committed.

"We in Malaysia do not resort to cruelty against our people. We've developed the country and the people are free to move about and this is the style of the Barisan Nasional government which is elected by the people and serves the people," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the BN had developed the country and created job opportunities and provided educational and healthcare facilities for the people.

Leaders of the country were also not afraid of the people and were free to go anywhere with their safety assured.

"I myself go to shopping complexes and meet the people without feeling afraid because we do not oppress our people. This is the BN, we're leaders merely because we wish to serve the people," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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