

06/04/2005

Mahathir-Malay

MALAYS SHOULD FOCUS ON MAJOR ISSUES, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

PUTRAJAYA, April 6 (Bernama) -- Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Malays should address issues that could affect their progress and self-prevalence such as corruption, drug abuse and HIV/Aids.

Major issues like these must be given attention, not frivolous matters, he said.

Dr Mahathir gave this advice to the delegation from the Umno Youth Culture, Arts and Heritage Bureau headed by its chairman, Azizul Nizam Bidin, who visited him at the Premier Leadership Foundation, here.

When asked by reporters after the visit on his views on the level of corrupt practice in this country, he said: "I think the government is doing its best (to address the problem). And it is not for me to comment."

Azizul Nizam told reporters that during the meeting, Dr Mahathir said efforts to battle corruption should start from the party with the members' resolution to stay away from the practice.

"He reminded Umno Youth to always be strong in continuing with our efforts to strengten the party. And he reminded us not to indulge in such practice (corruption)," he said.

Azizul Nizam, who is Umno Youth Exco member, said efforts to eliminate corruption would take time to be successful.

The Umno Youth leadership led by Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and his deputy, Khairy Jamaluddin, had stressed the importance for members of the movement to carry out their duties without resorting to corruption and dirty politics, he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir told reporters that he welcomed the setting up Putera Umno by Umno Youth.

On the wish by a nine-year-old orphan named Mahathir Mohamad of Pulau Nias, Indonesia, to meet him, Dr Mahathir said he was willing to see the boy if there were parties making the arrangement.

"I have no plans to go there but if the meeting can be arranged, I also want to meet him," he said.

Pulau Nias is among the areas badly battered by the massive earthquake west of Sumatra on March 29 which sent tremors to several states in the Malaysian peninsula.

-- BERNAMA

MAM MFJ JR AO