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Mahathir-Media

MEDIA URGED TO KEEP ALIVE INTEREST ON DISASTER SURVIVORS

KUALA LUMPUR, April 15 (Bernama) -- Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged the mass media to continue reporting on the survivors of earthquake and tsunami disasters although the events happened some time ago and were no longer "hot" news.

He said it was vital to keep the events in the public eye so that people would not forget the survivors and would continue to contribute aid to help them rebuild their lives.

Dr Mahathir said this after meeting a young survivor of the recent earthquake in Nias Island off Sumatra who is named after the Malaysian leader.

Mahathir Mohamad, a 9-year-old orphan, was brought to Malaysia yesterday after he expressed a wish to meet the former premier in an interview with a reporter of Utusan Malaysia.

The trip was arranged by the newspaper in cooperation with Malaysia Airlines and Malaysian Red Crescent Society.

At their meeting at Dr Mahathir's residence in Sungai Besi, the boy looked shy but managed to pass on a message on behalf of the other orphans at the Panti Asuhan Al-Wasliyah orphanage in Nias to Dr Mahathir seeking his help to repair their damaged home.

Dr Mahathir said he would try to help and asked the boy and his friends to be patient and strong in facing their hardship, and not to lose hope.

"They have to make efforts to study up to university and only then can they improve themselves and change their fate," he said.

Also present was Dr Mahathir's wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

-- BERNAMA

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