

20/10/2003

Abdullah: Staying calm best response to Western accusations

Alina Simon

JITRA, Sun. - Stay calm and find ways to protect Malaysia against the double standards being practised by the West, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

This would be the best response to accusations made by Western governments and media which had deliberately misinterpreted Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's opening statement at the just-concluded 10th Organisation of the Islamic Conference summit in Putrajaya.

In many reports, the Prime Minister had been portrayed as an enemy of the Jews.

Abdullah said: "I am not surprised that they had been saying things about us, but how we react is important."

The West, he said, was known for playing favourites. This was noticeable in its actions and policies, be they on the economy, the environment or human rights.

Abdullah said Malaysia should find ways to ensure that the country's interests were protected.

He was speaking at a Press conference after opening a colloquium jointly organised by Pemadam and tertiary institutions at Dewan Wawasan.

Abdullah was asked to comment on the loud and almost instantaneous condemnation of the Prime Minister's remarks by the European Union, the United States, Australia and other countries.

These Governments claimed that Dr Mahathir's statement that Jews rule the world by proxy was offensive and anti-Semitic.

Muslims, he said, should not allow such accusations and criticism to sway them from making changes for the better.

"We must prove that we are capable and peace-loving. We must also acquire the necessary knowhow in science and technology."

Earlier, in his opening speech, Abdullah said he would continue to carry out government policies after the retirement of Dr Mahathir at the end of the month.

"I am in the Government that set down these policies, and I fully believe in ensuring a smooth continuity to ensure their success," he said.

More than 4,000 participants attended the three-day event.

Also present were Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, Deputy Home Minister and Pemadam president Datuk Zainal Abidin Zain, and Kolej Universiti Kejuruteraan Utara Malaysia (Kukum) rector Prof Dr Kamarudin Hussin.