

Mahathir backs ban on Seksualiti Merdeka

Malaysiakini.com

November 4, 2011

by Aidila Razak

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has declared support for the police ban on Seksualiti Merdeka, saying that "we do not need it".

"I think it should be banned. There must be a law... you have to have a standard to adhere to. You don't need this sexuality thing, we don't need it," he told reporters.

"We don't need men marrying men, women marrying women and blatant exhibitionists in this country."

Speaking on the sidelines of the World Chinese Economic Conference, Mahathir, who chuckled when asked to comment on the matter, said there were limits to freedom.

"What will happen to us when people decide they will walk naked on the streets? We can't stop them, that is their right.

"If people decide, as I've seen in some countries, to have sex in public, what will happen to us?" the octogenarian asked.

Seksualiti Merdeka, a festival for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) community, was banned by police yesterday following an outcry from several quarters, particularly Muslim NGOs.

The Bar Council, Suaram and Sisters in Islam have expressed regret over the ban.

The event, to promote a better understanding of LGBT community in the country and for the people to respect their rights, has been held without problems since 2008.