

Be Mature, Don't Jeopardise National Security With No ISA
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TANJUNG MALIM -- Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed hope that Malaysians are mature and will not do anything that can jeopardise national security after the Internal Security Act 1960 has been abolished.

Concerned that certain quarters might take advantage of the abolishment of the ISA, Dr Mahathir hoped the people would not gamble away the fate of the country by taking the issue of national security for granted.

"I hope Malaysians are mature enough to understand that when there is no such security law (ISA) around, they must exercise self-control. You must discipline yourselves not to undermine the country's security," he said after delivering a Za'aba premier lecture at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, here, yesterday.

On the new laws to replace the ISA, Dr Mahathir hoped they could overcome weaknesses of the ISA to ensure no abuses.

"The shortcoming of the ISA is that there is no court trial and the decision depends on the discretion of those in authority, hence there could be misuse of power.

"We can have trials in court but then again, some detainees can get away if they have very good lawyers to defend them," he said.

On the willingness of the United States to assist Malaysia to draw up new laws to replace the ISA, Dr Mahathir said the government could listen to their views but at the same time, it should exercise caution.

"The US has the Patriot Act which gives full power to the President to do anything. If we go to the US, even our shoes will be checked and if they think we're Muslims, we'll be taken away separately and searched all over. Our government does not have to follow this.

"We are efficient too in looking after security. We don't need the US style of doing it," he said.

Dr Mahathir also challenged Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Aziz Nik Mat to carry on with his plan to implement hudud law in the state as he is no longer prime minister, nor an obstacle to the plan, as otherwise claimed by the PAS spiritual leader.

The former premier also chided the PAS state government for being so gung-ho about implementing hudud but failed to control the people in the state, which had the highest number of HIV infection cases from 2008 to 2009.

"If he (Nik Aziz) had properly taught them religion and was able to control them, Kelantan would not have the highest number of people infected with HIV, which can cause the deadly AIDS.

"He has been busy politicking instead, and chooses to blame me for not being able to implement hudud in Kelantan," he said.

Health Minister Liow Tiong Lai was reported to have said that the increase in HIV infections in Kelantan was almost four times the national average.

In 2008, the ratio of HIV infections in Malaysian was 13.3 cases for every 100,000 people and the ratio in 2009 was 10.8:100,000, while in Kelantan it was 47:100,000 in 2008 and 37.2:100,000 in 2009.

(Bernama)

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