

BN Youth slams interference in Malaysia's affairs

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KUALA LUMPUR: Stop interfering in Malaysia's internal affairs.

This is the Barisan National Youth's advice to the head of the European Union delegation here, Dr Thierry Rommel, on his criticism of the New Economic Policy.

Its chief, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, said the body would not tolerate baseless comments or criticism of national policies by foreigners.

He said foreigners should not interfere in government business, especially if they did not know the country's history.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak ticked off Rommel on Saturday for overstepping his boundaries and meddling in Malaysia's internal affairs.

"The BN Youth and Umno are with him (Najib) on this matter. Do not try to act smart," Hishammuddin told Rommel.

Rommel was quoted by the Associated Press last Thursday as saying that the NEP was discriminatory and could lead to problems in free trade negotiations between EU and Asean.

Asean and the EU had agreed to launch free trade talks with the first meeting scheduled in Vietnam next month.

He had reportedly added

that it was not a level playing field for foreign companies in the domestic economy.

Hishammuddin said Rommel had never taken the initiative to understand the country's background or study the history of the nation before making such comments.

"Who is he to teach us? His statements were arrogant and most importantly, outside his line of duty," he said.

He added that the BN Youth would send a protest note to Rommel on the matter.

Hishammuddin was speaking after attending the Malaysian Red Crescent annual general meeting at its headquarters in Ampang yesterday.

Meanwhile, Rommel denied creating a controversy in the matter, saying that he would be happy to hold a dialogue with the Foreign Ministry.

He said he had been hoping for a meeting with ministry officials to discuss issues of common interest.

"If I am invited for a dialogue (by the foreign ministry), I would be very happy to go. That would be great."

Rommel stressed that his "approach over the past few years has been one of trying to deepen Malaysia-EU relations".

"I feel very comfortable with that," Rommel said.

"There has been no change in my attitude."