

1976

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT. 25 (BERNAMA)—DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT WILL EXERCISE SUPERVISION OVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF RELIGION IN THE COUNTRY.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND EDUCATION MINISTER SAID THIS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER WITH THE PROVISION OF AN AVENUE FOR CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS ON THE SUPERVISION.

THERE COULD NOT BE ANY "CLOSED" SUPERVISION, HE ADDED WHEN OPENING THE THREE-DAY SECOND MALAYSIA ISLAMIC EDUCATION SEMINAR AT THE UNIVERSITI KEBANGSAAN.

OTHERWISE ANY DEVIATION BY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BRING ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT THEREFORE REGARDED THE SEMINAR AS IMPORTANT FOR IT BROUGHT TOGETHER DIVERSE GROUPS AND ENABLED THEM TO VOICE THEIR VIEWS AND OPINIONS IN AN ORDERLY WAY.

—BERNAMA MORE HM 1337

HE REMINDED THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE DANGER THAT AN IDEOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS +LIBERALISM+ MIGHT DEVELOP AMONG MUSLIMS IN THE COUNTRY. IN THE LIGHT OF THIS REALISATION THE GOVERNMENT FELT THERE SHOULD BE SOME MEASURE OF CONTROL OVER THE LEARNING AND TEACHING OF RELIGION. 94

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, HE ADDED, SHOULD ALSO BE +IN THE OPEN+ BUT THERE WERE SOME GROUPS UNWILLING TO TEACH IN AN +OPEN WAY.+

DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THERE WAS NO REASON WHY RELIGIOUS LECTURERS SHOULD DELIVER THEIR LECTURES IN A SITUATION OF HASTE AND DISORGANISATION.

THEY SHOULD REALISE THAT THEIR AUDIENCE WERE SOMETIMES STUDENTS WHOSE THINKING AND BELIEF COULD BE EASILY INFLUENCED.

HE STRESSED THAT SELECTION OF RELIGIOUS TEACHERS SHOULD BE BASED UPON MORE STRINGENT CONSIDERATIONS OF CHARACTER AND QUALIFICATIONS.

— BERNAMA MORE 1346/YF

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MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DR. MAHATHIR SAID PEOPLE WISHING TO TEACH ISLAM IN A CLANDESTINE MANNER SHOULD BE QUESTIONED AS TO THEIR INTENTION.

HE SAID SOME GROUPS HAD SAID THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO RESTRICTIONS ON MISSIONARY OR PROPAGATION UNDERTAKINGS.

BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE WRONG TEACHINGS MIGHT BE DISSEMINATED, HE ADDED.

DR. MAHATHIR STRESSED THESE TYPES OF +CLOSED+ RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS SHOULD BE MONITORED ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE EMERGENCE OF CERTAIN GROUPS AMONG THE MALAYS WITH THEIR OWN INTERPRETATIONS OF ISLAM. -- BERNAMA MORE 1350/YF

HE SAID THAT AT PRESENT THERE WERE NOT ONLY THE GENUINE ISLAM BUT ALSO SECTARIAN GROUPS ACCORDING TO ASSOCIATION, SKIN COLOUR, YOUNG OR OLD, CREATED BY MAN BASED ON THEIR OWN INTERPRETATION AND FOR THEIR OWN INTERESTS.

SUCH GROUPS WOULD NOT CAUSE ANY PROBLEM IF THEY ADHERED TO THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM AND UPHELD ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY.

HOWEVER, IN THEIR EFFORTS TO SEEK INFLUENCE, THEY OFTEN THEY MADE BASELESS ALLEGATIONS AND SMEARED AT OTHER MUSLIMS ABOUT THEIR BELIEF WHICH INDIRECTLY SPILT THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY.

HE SAID THAT THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF USING RELIGION AS AN INSTRUMENT DEPENDED ON THE ABILITY OF THE MUSLIMS TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE WHAT WAS TRUE AND WHAT WAS FALSE.

DR MAHATHIR SAID THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF SOME GROUPS WAS DISUNITY AMONG MUSLIMS WHICH WHERE UNITY HAD EARLIER PREVAILED.

— BERNAMA MORE 2127/A1

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MAHATHIR 5 KUALA LUMPUR

THEY WISHED TO SEE THE +TRUE+ TEACHINGS OF ISLAM TAKE SWAY BUT DID ISLAM EVER ADVOCATED THIS BE DONE BY HUMILIATING AND ATTACKING OTHER MUSLIMS? HE QUESTIONED.

DID ISLAM EVER COMMAND THAT UNITY AMONG MUSLIMS BE BROKEN AND MUSLIMS THEMSELVES DISARRAYED? HE FURTHER ASKED.

DR. MAHATHIR STRESSED THAT IF THEY EVER SUCCEEDED IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS, MUSLIMS WOULD BE DIVIDED INTO SMALL FACTIONS INCESSANTLY WARRING WITH ONE ANOTHER.

EVENTUALLY MUSLIMS WOULD BE TOO WEAK TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST ANY DANGER AND THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEF WOULD BE ERODED BECAUSE OF THEY MANY DIFFERENT AND CONFLICTING SCHOOLS OF INTERPRETATION. --BERNAMA 2130/MD