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DEPUTY Prime Minister, (Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said last night that there was a need to establish an Islamic hospital which should be financed by the Muslims through zakat and special collections.

He said that the hospital should not be another of the Islamic symbol created by the efficiency, intelligence and wealth of non-Muslims "as there are too many Islamic symbols which actually symbolise the efficiency, capability and wealth of non-Muslims".

Dr. Mahathir, who was speaking at the opening of the three-day forum on the medical

KUALA LUMPUR,

Saturday

issues in the Islamic community at the University of Malaya here last night, said that the Islamic hospital funded by the Muslims themselves should not be limited to Muslims patients alone as it would tarnish the Islamic religion.

He added that with the establishment of the Islamic hospital "the doubts that arise from the systemic medicine which is now practised, will be further diminished".

He pointed out that what was now termed as Western medicine was actually improvement and development of Islamic medicine.

SUSPICIONS

"This is seldom mentioned by members of the medical profession in both the East and the West which has in turn raised doubts and suspicions among Muslims," he stated.

Dr. Mahathir, who is also the Minister of Education, added that it was also appropriate that Muslims gain expertise in and practise this medicine, in view of the teachings, attitudes and history of Islam in relation to medicine.