

MAHATHIR-MISSIONARY
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EMBARGO: FOR USE AFTER 10 TONIGHT.

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PETALING JAYA JUNE 30 (BERNAMA)-DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THERE WERE SOME PEOPLE IN PRIVILEGED POSITIONS WHO SAW POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN MISSIONARY EFFORTS.

HE SAID SUCH PEOPLE WOULD USE RELIGION TO SEEK PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT THIS KIND OF ABUSE OF OPPORTUNITIES AND POSITIONS WAS FORBIDDEN BY ISLAM AND COULD CREATE AN UNHEALTHY SITUATION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SAID THIS IN A SPEECH AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF UNIVERSITI KEBANGSAAN ISLAMIC STUDIES FACULTY HERE TONIGHT. THE SPEECH WAS READ BY DEPUTY EDUCATION MINISTER HAJI SALLEH JAFARUDDIN.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID RELIGION MIXED WITH POLITICS WOULD CONFUSE AND DAMAGE SOCIETY AND WEAKEN BELIEF.
-BERNAMA MORE HM 1857

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HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE SPREAD OF ISLAM THROUGH MISSIONARY EFFORTS WOULD INDIRECTLY HELP THE GOVERNMENT TO STAMP OUT ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES AND VICE WHICH COULD NOT BE WIPED OUT BY LAWS ALONE.

"UNFORTUNATELY AS USUAL, A GOOD ACTIVITY BECAME THE FOCUS OF NOT ONLY THE TRUE AND SINCERE BUT ALSO THOSE WHO SEEK ADVANTAGE FOR THEMSELVES," HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR TOLD THOSE IN PRIVILEGED POSITIONS IN SOCIETY NOT TO SEE THE INTEREST IN MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES AND THE WILLINGNESS OF MUSLIMS TO LISTEN TO EXHORTATIONS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK INFLUENCE.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER REFERRED TO THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE SHOWN BY A LARGE NUMBER OF MUSLIMS TOWARDS ISLAMIC TEACHINGS.

EVERY MUSLIM SHOULD LEARN THE RULES AND LAWS OF ISLAM WITHOUT WAITING FOR ANYONE TO ENCOURAGE THEM.

"BUT MANY PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO DIRECTIVES. IF THERE ARE NONE, THEN THEY MAKE IT AS AN ISSUE," HE SAID.

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ACCORDING TO HIM, WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS ENCOURAGEMENT FROM FELLOW MUSLIMS AND NOT FORCE.

REGARDING ISLAMIC STUDIES IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE EDUCATION MINISTRY DID NOT PROPOSE TO IMPOSE THE COURSE ON UNDERGRADUATES IN THE BELIEF THAT THE INSTITUTIONS CONCERNED KNEW THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND REALISED THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

THE MINISTRY WOULD HOWEVER WELCOME ANY MOVE BY THE INSTITUTIONS TO OFFER ISLAMIC STUDIES TO THEIR MUSLIM STUDENTS, HE SAID. --
BERNAMA HM 1907