

ALOR STAR, JUNE 2 (BERNAMA)—DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY HIT OUT AT CERTAIN GROUPS FOR DISTORTING THE INTERPRETATIONS OF KORANIC VERSES AND SAYINGS OF THE PROPHETS FOR THEIR OWN INTERESTS.

HE SAID THAT THESE GROUPS HAD EVEN GONE SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT CERTAIN DECREES OF GOD NO LONGER SUITED THEM AND WERE LOOKING FOR THOSE THAT SUPPORTED THEIR VIEWS.

THEIR ACTIONS HAD CONFUSED THE PEOPLE BECAUSE THESE GROUPS SPOKE IN A LANGUAGE WHICH THE PEOPLE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND. HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE ALOR STAR UMNO DIVISION DELEGATES MEETING HERE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS CONCERNED BECAUSE SOMETIMES INTERPRETATIONS WERE INACCURATE AND TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT TO LEND CREDENCE TO UNISLAMIC IDEAS.

HE SAID THAT APART FROM THE PROBLEM OF MISLEADING TEACHINGS AND WRONG INTERPRETATIONS, THE COUNTRY ALSO HAD SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND OTHER AILMENTS. —BERNAMA MORE 1748/MD

+IF WE ONLY GIVE ATTENTION TO RELIGIOUS ISSUES AND IGNORE THE PEOPLE'S DAILY STRUGGLES, THERE WILL STILL BE PEOPLE WHO WILL CAPITALISE ON THE SITUATION TO BLOW EVERYTHING OUT OF PROPORTION,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS DOING ITS BEST TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THE MALAYS AND OTHER BUMIPUTRAS.

THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, HAD GIVEN THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY, DO BUSINESS AND VENTURE INTO OTHER FIELDS BUT THE NATION'S ENEMIES HAD +PERSUADED+ SOME STUDENTS TO DISCONTINUE THEIR STUDIES BECAUSE ACCORDING TO THEM KNOWLEDGE WAS ONLY FOR THIS WORLD.

THERE WERE SOME WHO CLUNG TO THE BELIEF THAT WOMEN HAD NO NEED FOR EDUCATION BECAUSE THEIR PLACE WAS IN THE KITCHEN, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT, SAID THAT AS A RESULT SEVERAL WOMEN STUDENTS IN CENTRES OF HIGHER LEARNING HAD DROPPED OUT. —BERNAMA MORE 1753/MD

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79

MAHATHIR-RELIGION 3 ALOR STAR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE MALAYS MADE UP ONLY A SMALL PORTION OF HUMANITY AND IN MALAYSIA THERE WERE ONLY SIX MILLION OF THEM.

+WE DO NOT POSSESS THE ENERGY, THE STRENGTH OR WEALTH TO DECIDE OUR OWN DESTINY EXCEPT TO MAKE FULL USE OF WHAT WE HAVE,+ HE SAID.

+AND, IF OUR WOMEN ARE CAST ASIDE AND NOT GIVEN THE CHANCE TO BE EDUCATED AND TO HELP OVERCOME OUR PROBLEMS THEN THE MALAYS WILL BECOME EVEN WEAKER,+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR DESCRIBED THOSE TRYING TO DISSUADE MALAY WOMEN FROM SEEKING KNOWLEDGE AS TRAITORS TO THEIR RACE AND RELIGION BECAUSE ISLAM REQUIRED ITS FOLLOWERS TO BE COMPLETELY EQUIPPED TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAITH.

HE REMINDED UMNO MEMBERS OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE MALAYS DID NOT SUFFER THE SAME FATE THAT HAD BEFALLEN MUSLIMS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES.

IN THIS RESPECT, HE SAID, UMNO HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF +STEPPING+ ON ANYONE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT UMNO'S STRUGGLE WAS TO +GIVE THE APPROPRIATE POWERS TO THE MALAYS AND THAT THESE POWERS ARE USED TO SAFEGUARD THEIR POSITION AND NOT BY SEIZING THE PROPERTY OF THE NON-MALAYS+. —BERNAMA 1800/MD