

NO 17 (F)
MAHATHIR - GLORY

KUALA LUMPUR, NOV. 24 (BERNAMA)---MUSLIMS WERE TODAY CALLED UPON TO ADHERE TO THE TRUE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM TO WIN BACK THEIR GLORIOUS PAST.

PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) IN MAKING THE CALL SAID MUSLIMS TODAY WERE WEAK DUE TO THEIR OWN FAULTS AS THEY HAD NOT FOLLOWED THE TRUE TEACHINGS OF THEIR RELIGION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT BECAUSE OF THESE WEAKNESSES, MUSLIMS HAD TO +BEG FOR EVEN THE NEED FOR DEFENDING ISLAM.+

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS OPENING THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF THE 15TH CENTURY HIJRAH WHERE ABOUT 400 PARTICIPANTS FROM 40 ISLAMIC COUNTRIES ARE ATTENDING.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID: +ALLAH IN HIS INFINITE WISDOM HAS LATELY GRANTED THE MUSLIMS UNTOLD WEALTH.

+BUT INSTEAD OF SEIZING UPON THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REGAIN OUR STRENGTH, WE SQUANDER THEM ON NEEDLESS LUXURIES

WHILE AT THE SAME TIME WE QUARREL OVER THE RIGHT USAGE OF SUCH WEALTH. +---BERNAMA MORE 1240/AH

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HE SAID THAT DESPITE THE BOUNTY OF ALLAH THE MUSLIMS WERE STILL DEPENDENT UPON OTHERS FOR THEIR WELL-BEING AND SECURITY.

HE REMINDED THE DELEGATES THAT +WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO PRESUME THAT ALLAH WILL PROVIDE US MERELY BECAUSE WE ARE FOLLOWERS OF THE TRUE RELIGION AND WE PERFORM THE IBADAH STRICTLY AND REGULARLY.+

+FOR HIM TO HELP US, WE HAVE TO MAKE THE EFFORTS TO HELP OURSELVES.+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID IF ALLAH SO WISHED ALL THE QURAISH WOULD HAVE EMBRACED ISLAM, BUT HE SENT MUHAMMAD HAD TO WORK AT PREACHING ISLAM FOR 23 YEARS BEFORE ALLAH DECLARED THAT ISLAM WAS FINALLY THE COMPLETE RELIGION.

+IF THE PROPHET OF ALLAH HAD TO WORK, WE WITH OUR WEAKNESSES AND OUR FAULTS HAVE TO WORK EVEN HARDER,+ HE SAID.

+IBADAH IS NOT JUST THE PERFORMANCE OF FARDHU'AIN. IN ISLAM EVERYTHING THAT WE DO FOR THE SAKE OF ISLAM IS IBADAH.+

---BERNAMA MORE 1256/AH

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE, THE WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD AND TO SUBJECT ONE SELF TO DISCIPLINE WERE ALL IBADAH IN ISLAM FOR THEY GIVE STRENGTH AND SECURITY TO THE MUSLIMS AND TO ISLAM.

TOUCHING ON HIJRAH -- THE BEGINNING OF THE ISLAMIC ERA-- HE SAID HIJRAH WAS THE TURNING POINT WHEREIN ISLAM WHICH WAS CONFINED TO A FEW IN MECCA, BECAME THE RELIGION OF 900 MILLION PEOPLE OF THE WORLD TODAY.

THERE WAS A LESSON TO BE LEARNT FROM HIJRAH, HE SAID, AS IT TAUGHT MUSLIM HOW THE PROPHET SUSTAINED AND MANAGED TO SPREAD THE TEACHING OF ALLAH.

ISLAM WAS NOT SPREAD BY BATTERING HEADS AGAINST STONE WALLS, BY OBSTINACY AND FOOLHARDINESS AND CERTAINLY NOT BY ARROGANCE AND BY FORCE.

+ISLAM IS SPREAD BY WISDOM AND STRATEGY, WISDOM TO KNOW AND RECOGNISE OUR WEAKNESSES AS MUCH AS OUR STRENGTH, AND KNOWING THESE, TO PLAN OUR STRATEGY FOR THE WEAKNESSES OF TODAY MAY BE THE STRENGTH OF TOMORROW+, HE SAID. --BERNAMA MORE 1321/MD

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HIJRAH HAD INSPIRED AND SUSTAINED MANY MUSLIMS EVEN IN THEIR BLACKEST HOUR AND HAD HELPED MANY TO SOLIDER ON.

HE HOPED THAT THE HIJRAH WOULD HOLD THIS MEANING TO ALL MUSLIMS WHETHER IN DEFEAT OR IN VICTORY +AS THERE IS NO ROOM FOR DESPAIR BECAUSE ALLAH IS ALWAYS WITH US+.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE CONFERENCE WAS TO PONDER THE PROBLEMS THAT MUSLIMS FACED IN UPHOLDING THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICE OF ISLAM.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN THE +GOLDEN ERA OF ISLAM+ CIVILIZATION MEANT ISLAM AND NOTHING ELSE AND OTHERS WERE LIVING IN DARKNESS WHEN ISLAMIC TEACHINGS RAISED MAN ABOVE THE BARBARIC WAYS OF THEIR PAST.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID SADLY TODAY THIS WAS NO LONGER TRUE AS THE MUSLIMS WERE DIVIDED AND FRAGMENTED AND ALL THEIR WEALTH WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM AND THEY BECAME THE POOREST AND THE MOST DEPENDENT OF PEOPLES.

HE ADDED THAT THE BACKWARDNESS OF MUSLIMS SHOULD NOT BE BLAMED ON OTHERS BUT +WE OURSELVES SHOULD BE BLAMED FOR THIS+.

IF MUSLIMS WERE SINCERE AND TRUTHFUL TO THEMSELVES AND TO ISLAM, THEY SHOULD ADMIT THAT MUCH OF WHAT HAD BEFALLEN THEM WAS DUE TO THEIR OWN FAULT AS MUCH AS THE GLORIOUS PERIOD OF ISLAM WAS DUE TO THE PRACTISING THE TRUE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM. --BERNAMA MORE 1340/MD

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FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, WHEN ISLAM URGES ITS FOLLOWEERS TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE +WE CHOOSE TO DIVIDE KNOWLEDGE INTO SPIRITUAL AND NON-SPIRITUAL AND WE REJECT WHAT WE TERMED AS NON SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE+.

+WHEN ISLAM URGES US TO BE PREPARED TO DEFEND OURSELVES WE CHOSE TO IGNORE THAT WARS CANNOT ALWAYS BE FOUGHT WITH HORSES AND CAMELS AND SWORDS, THAT NEW WEAPONS ARE NEEDED, HENCE WE ARE DEFEATED+, HE SAID.

+WHEN ISLAM URGES TOLERANCE WE CHOSE TO BE ARROGANT AND TO FORCE UPON OTHERS THAT WE HAVE NO POWER TO DO+.

+WHEN ISLAM PERMITS THE ACQUISITION OF WEALTH AND THAT GIVING IS BETTER THAN RECEIVING, WE CHOSE TO GLORIFY POVERTY AND HONOUR THOSE WHO BEG FROM OTHERS+, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REGRETTED THAT THERE WERE MANY OTHER THINGS MUSLIMS DID AND IN FACT PREACHED WHICH WERE CONTRARY NOT ONLY TO THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM BUT TO ITS VERY SPIRIT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS DUE TO THESE FAULTS THAT MUSLIMS WERE WEAK. --BERNAMA 1345/MD