

KUALA LUMPUR, DEC. 7 (BERNAMA) -- THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION HAS WITHSTOOD THE TEST OF TIME OVER THE 24 YEARS SINCE MERDEKA AND PROVEN TO BE MOST SUITED TO THE COUNTRY'S NEEDS, PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY.

IT WOULD REMAIN AS THE SUPREME LEGAL DOCUMENT IN MALAYSIA WITH ISLAM ENSHRINED AS THE OFFICIAL RELIGION OF THE COUNTRY, HE TOLD ENCIK MOHAMAD NAKHAIE BIN HAJI AHMAD (PAS-BALING) IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT.

HE SAID ARTICLE 3(1) OF THE CONSTITUTION LAID OUT THE POSITION OF ISLAM AS THE STATE RELIGION AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALWAYS BEEN GUIDED BY THIS IN ITS ADMINISTRATION OF THE COUNTRY.

THE GOVERNMENT HAD NEVER DONE ANYTHING THAT HAD COMPROMISED THE STATUS OF ISLAM AS THE OFFICIAL RELIGION OF MALAYSIA.

+I WISH TO STATE EXPRESSLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALWAYS UPHOLD THE APPOINTED POSITION OF ISLAM IN THE COUNTRY AS REQUIRED BY OUR CONSTITUTION+, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REMINDED THE PAS MEMBER THAT HIS PARTY HAD ACCEPTED THE CONSTITUTION AND THIS POLICY WHEN IT WAS IN THE BARISAN NASIONAL GOVERNMENT. --BERNAMA/MORE 1726/MD

OTHER COUNTRIES WITH BIGGER MUSLIM POPULATIONS DID NOT HAVE A CONSTITUTION BETTER THAN THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION IN ACCORDING ISLAM THIS STATUS.

TO A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION FROM ENCIK NAKHAIE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT ALTHOUGH RELIGION FELL UNDER THE PREROGATIVE OF THE VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS THERE WAS COORDINATION IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ISLAM BECAUSE ALL STATE GOVERNMENTS WERE CONTROLLED BY THE RULING BARISAN NASIONALS PARTY.

TO A QUESTION FROM ENCIK SHAARI JUSOH (BN-KANGAR) ON THE ACTION TO BE TAKEN AGAINST THOSE USING ISLAM FOR POLITICAL AND OTHER ENDS, HE SAID APPROPRIATE ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST ACTIVITIES PREJUDICIAL TO THE SANCTITY OF ISLAM. --BERNAMA 1730/MD