

Give them the correct picture: Dr M

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KOTA KINABALU, Tues. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on Muslims to dispel the impression among non-Muslims that Islam is a parochial religion.

He said if properly explained, non-Muslims would learn that Islam is not a hindrance to progress and development.

Muslims must mix freely to prevent misunderstanding, he said at the stone-laying ceremony of the \$156.5 million Sabah Islamic Religious Council headquarters building here.

The Prime Minister said if this was done, non-Muslims would understand that Muslims are tolerant and ready to

face challenges.

He said even if the non-Muslims did not convert to Islam, they would have a fair understanding of the religion.

Unfortunately, he said, there are groups in the country who are out to create chaos and misunderstanding among the Muslims themselves.

"These groups through their deviant teachings have made Muslims to be misunderstood by other Malaysians and also people from abroad," he said.

He said these people like those from the Crypto and those who attacked the police station in Batu Pahat were originally Muslims themselves but became extremists through deviant

teachings.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was handed a memorandum by Usno on the problems faced by the party in the election.

"One of the problems could be about the fielding of independent candidates by Barisan component parties in Sabah. But I have yet to study the memorandum," he said in response to a question.

The party has been protesting against Berjaya's fielding of independent candidates in the five constituencies allocated to Usno.

It is common knowledge in Sabah that they are from Berjaya and the party itself has admitted it.