

Look East policy and the Prophet

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IPOH, Sun. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight the Government's Look East policy was in line with the teachings of Prophet Muhammad — to seek knowledge even as far as China.

The Government, he said, wants the people to learn from the Japanese and South Koreans their ethics and attitude towards work.

weak, not progressive. We lack the means, the discipline and the drive. We are not using every resource, power and potential that we have to change our fate," he declared.

"This is not because Islam forbids us to change but because we are only interested in the simple things Islam asks us to do.

"Unfortunately, matters that necessitate discipline and drive have been put aside as they

What was important, Dr Mahathir said, was that the knowledge and work methods acquired would help free Malaysians from the dependence on others for their own security and well-being.

For this reason, the Prime Minister added, the Government's policy should not be misinterpreted.

Dr Mahathir said only those who did not want Muslims to succeed, to be strong and free, would misinterpret the Government's objective.

Potential

"We are copying the way they work. We are not confusing our religion with theirs," he explained.

Speaking at the opening of the National Quran reading competition here, Dr Mahathir said the theme *Work Discipline and Drive in Islam*, was most appropriate as the qualities were not only encouraged in Islam but would benefit anyone who developed them.

He said discipline and drive were essential qualities without which work was meaningless.

"There was no way to guarantee the future of Muslims except through upgrading discipline and drive.

The Prime Minister also spoke of the need for Muslims to come to terms with the truth about themselves.

"We must be brave to face the truth. We are

conflict with our desires," he said.

The Prime Minister also called for Muslims involved in the dakwah movement to do so with a deep sense of realisation and meaning.

He urged them not to cause a split among themselves even if their aims and objectives differed.

Dr Mahathir reminded them that dakwah meant an effort to reflect Islam as a way of life for joy and prosperity.

Earlier, Datuk Seri Kamaruddin Mohamad Isa, chairman of the central committee for the competition, said the Malaysian Dakwah Islamiah Foundation has set up a special unit — the Muslim Guidance Service Unit — to help Muslims solve their problems.

He said the counsellors would help those who faced personal or other problems.

He said the service was through personal, telephone or correspondence counselling.

Datuk Seri Kamaruddin also spoke of the lack of discipline among youths which made them weak and victims to society's ills like drugs.

He said youths who did not have discipline would also be susceptible to deviationist religious teachings.

He said there were over 40 types of such teachings in the country.