

MAHATHIR - ISLAM

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT. 10 (BERNAMA) -- STUDIES ON ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION WILL BE INTRODUCED IN ALL LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AS A STEP TO EXPOSE THE RELIGION TO MORE PEOPLE, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID TODAY.

HE SAID ISLAM BEING THE OFFICIAL RELIGION OF THE COUNTRY, THE PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT IT.

THE MOVE SHOULD NOT BE MISCONSTRUED AS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO CONVERT NON-MUSLIMS TO ISLAM, HE STRESSED IN HIS POLICY SPEECH AT THE 33RD UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY TODAY.

THIS IDEA WAS TO TEACH THE SUBJECT SIMILAR TO THE TEACHING OF HISTORY OF BRITISH EMPIRE DURING THE COLONIAL DAYS.

+IN THIS WAY, WE HOPE TO REDUCE THE APPREHENSION OF SOME NON-MUSLIMS TOWARDS THE RELIGION,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE 1500/MK

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THE PRIME MINISTER BELIEVED THAT THE STEPS WOULD FURTHER ENHANCE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE VARIOUS RACES IN MALAYSIA. HE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT EFFORTS TO INCLULCATE ISLAMIC IDEALS INTO THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE PIONEERED BY UMNO BECAUSE IT WAS NOT ONLY AN ISLAMIC PARTY BUT ALSO THE BACKBONE OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS RESPONSIBLE TOWARDS ISLAM AND THE NATION.

HE SAID MANY ISLAMIC IDEALS WOULD SLOWLY BE INTRODUCED IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRY IN STAGES.

+ALL THIS WOULD BE DONE WITHOUT JEORPARDISING THE POSITION OF OTHER RELIGIONS AS PROTECTED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION.+

SO FAR DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S GOVERNMENT HAD ANNOUNCED ITS DECISION TO SET UP THE ISLAMIC BANK AND THE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY. -- MORE 1543/MK

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MEANWHILE, THE EDUCATION MINISTRY HAD COMPLETED THE SYLLABUS ON ISLAMIC CIVILISATION STUDIES TO BE INTRODUCED IN ALL INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN THE COUNTRY.

THE INISTRY HAD ALSO SET UP A COMMITTEE TO WRITE A BOOK ON ISLAMIC CIVILISATION.

EDUCATION MINISTER, DATUK DR. SULAIMAN DAUD TOLD BERNAMA TODAY THAT THE STUDY OF ISLAMIC CIVILISATION WOULD BE SIMILAR TO THE STUDY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE DURING THE TIME OF BRITISH RULE. -- MORE 1545/MK

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HE BELIEVED THAT THE STEPS WOULD HELP BRING THE VARIOUS RACES CLOSER.

HOWEVER, IT WAS TOO EARLY TO GIVE DETAILS ON THE SUBJECT AND THE DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION, HE SAID.

DATUK DR. SULAIMAN WHO IS ALSO DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE PARTI BUMIPUTRA BERSATU SARAWAK (PBBS) SAID DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S POLICY SPEECH HAD GIVEN A CLEAR PICTURE OF THE DIRECTION THE COUNTRY IS HEADING.

+THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH A CLEAR CUT STATEMENT IS MADE BY THE LEADERSHIP,+ HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA 1546/MK