

PULAU PINANG, AUG 2 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CRITICISED CERTAIN GROUPS OF MUSLIMS WHO HE SAID WERE A DISGRACE TO ISLAM BY THEIR ARROGANT ATTITUDE.

HE SAID THE ACTIONS OF THESE GROUPS GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEIR ARROGANCE CAME ABOUT FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE RELIGION WHEN IN FACT ISLAM NEVER TAUGHT ARROGANCE.

HE SAID THESE GROUPS ALSO FREQUENTLY CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT AND ATTEMPTED TO INCITE THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY INTO HATING THE GOVERNMENT.

+CONSEQUENTLY, DESPITE THE GOVERNMENT'S SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO PROPAGATE ISLAMIC TEACHINGS, THESE PEOPLE CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO ADMIT THE SUCCESS OF THE EFFORTS,+ HE SAID IN AN ADDRESS TO 2,000 PEOPLE BEFORE OPENING THE \$800,000 AL-HUDA MOSQUE AT SUNGAI ARA HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ACTIONS OF THESE PEOPLE HAD ALSO CREATED CONFUSION AND EVEN FEAR AMONG THE NON-MUSLIMS WHEN THE GOVERNMENT EMBARKED ON INJECTION OF ISLAMIC VALUES IN THE ADMINISTRATION. -- MORE

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#### MAHATHIR-ISLAM 2 PULAU PINANG

HE SAID THIS WOULD HAMPER GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO FORGE GREATER UNITY AMONG THE PEOPLE AND GIVE RISE TO APPREHENSION, NOT ONLY AMONG THE MUSLIMS BUT ALSO THE NON-MUSLIMS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ASSURED NON-MUSLIMS THAT THE ASSIMILATION OF ISLAMIC VALUES WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANYONE. NEITHER WAS IT AIMED AT CONVERTING THEM TO ISLAM.

THE POLICY, HE SAID, GAVE EMPHASIS TO ALL THAT WAS GOOD AND FAIR, AND ENCOURAGED TOLERANCE AND OTHER VIRTUES THAT WOULD GUARANTEE PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG MALAYSIANS.

+THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO BAD INTENTIONS AGAINST ANYONE. ALL WE WANT TO DO IS TO MAKE THIS COUNTRY STRONG AND PEACEFUL SO THAT THE PEOPLE CAN LIVE IN HARMONY,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS THE DUTY OF MUSLIMS TO SHOW NON-MUSLIMS THAT THEIR RELIGION WOULD NOT BRING DESTRUCTION TO OTHERS. -- MORE

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#### MAHATHIR-ISLAM 3 PULAU PINANG

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID NON-MUSLIMS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT ACTS OF CRUELTY AND ARROGANCE OF SOME LEADERS OF ISLAMIC NATIONS DID NOT ARISE FROM ISLAMIC TEACHINGS BUT FROM THE FAILINGS OF THE LEADERS THEMSELVES.

HE SAID MALAYSIANS OUGHT TO BE GRATEFUL FOR THE PEACE THEY ENJOYED AND THE FREEDOM TO PRACTISE THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR LATER PERFORMED FRIDAY PRAYERS AND HAD LUNCH WITH OTHER MUSLIMS AT THE MOSQUE.

THE MOSQUE, SITED ON 0.41 HECTARES OF LAND ENDOWED BY THE TUNAS MUDA COOPERATIVE, CAN ACCOMMODATE MORE THAN 1,500 PEOPLE.

IT IS THE THIRD MOSQUE IN THE SUNGAI ARA AREA AND REPLACES THE 80-YEAR-OLD FORMER MOSQUE WHICH HAS NOW BEEN TURNED INTO A BALAI ISLAM.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE CEREMONY WERE CHIEF MINISTER DR LIM CHONG EU, STATE ISLAMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DATUK HAJI HASSAN MOHAMED NOH AND STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS. -- BERNAMA

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