

# VIEWS ON GOVT WILL ALWAYS DIFFER: DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The Government cannot be accused of being un-Islamic because there is no common interpretation of what an Islamic Government is.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said: "We cannot be said to be un-Islamic just because we hold strongly to our interpretation which is different from that of other people.

"There are various interpretations of what an Islamic government should be and nobody can insist that his interpretation is the most precise.

"In my opinion, the differing views will exist until eternity because the interpretations are not made by Allah's messengers although they may be religious experts," he said when opening the Islamic Centre here today.

Dignitaries who attended the opening included visiting Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, his wife Madam Nasreen, and the head of the Al-Azhar University,

Mr Ali Gad Alhaq.

The Prime Minister said Muslims should not hold steadfastly to one interpretation to the extent of becoming enemies with another group that would not accept their interpretation.

"If we do this, there will be trouble, including civil war," he warned.

He said that an interpretation could only be rejected after it was studied in detail by appointed experts and found to breach Islamic principles.

He called on all Muslims to concentrate on strengthening the community, as required by Islam, and that an important step towards this was instilling solidarity.

"In addition, we must be wary of and reject certain elements out to split the Muslim community."

Dr Mahathir said the Government's efforts in instilling Islamic awareness had almost been achieved and there had been many benefits from the programme.

He said that while the

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Muslims were "committed" to Islam, the non-Muslims did not feel bitter about the assimilation of Islamic values in government administration.

"They (non-Muslims) now understand better Islamic viewpoints on humanitarian and other questions. They do not oppose, and even support it openly."

Dr Mahathir said this had encouraged the Government to take more positive steps to ensure Islamic eminence in the country.

He explained that the objective in the assimila-

tion of Islamic values was to enhance the quality of life with positive attitudes on living and employment.

"We want Islam to be the prime mover for Muslims to take every opportunity to strengthen their position."

Dr Mahathir said Islamic teaching on thrift did not restrict itself to financial matters but encompassed the attitude on tapping potentials of success and prosperity.

"Leaving a plot of land uncultivated also indicates a lack of thrift," he added.