

'ASSOCIATES OF SATAN' GET THE RAP

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has described lazy, unemployed youths who hang around amusement centres and shopping complexes as associates of Satan whose wastage of time and energy can threaten economic stability.

He said these youths and big-spenders who enjoyed spending everything they earned without saving for rainy days were the ones likely to commit crimes like bribery, robbery and thefts.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad painted this grim picture of social ills and the economic slowdown in his message in the souvenir programme of the 27th international *musabaqah* (Quran reading) competition which started today.

Calling on Muslims to be more disciplined and thrifty in spending, the Prime Minister said: "Muslims of this country must realise that we are now facing an economic slowdown.

"Wastage, be it in the form of expenditure, time or energy, will lead to great losses and threaten the economic stability of the nation.

"This is why Islam forbids its followers from being wasteful and considers those who are wasteful associates of Satan.

Various crimes

"One of the most glaring consequences of wastefulness is that it brings a host of problems and hardship to a person no matter what group he is in.

"Due to his wastefulness and extravagant attitude, the person will be economically helpless and thus expose himself to various crimes such as bribery, robbery and theft."

"There are those who prefer to waste their precious time and energy by hanging around aimlessly at amusement centres or shopping complexes. These people forget that the country is in need of their energy and services.

"Although the services contributed by them may not result in immense material gain, their honesty in contributing their services is considered an *ibadat*

(good deed) which will be appropriately rewarded by Allah the Almighty."

He said the theme *Thriftiness will be blessed, wastefulness brings misfortune* was chosen to remind Muslims of the practice of thrift as one of the exhortations of Islam.

"If we are thrifty in our spending, we would be able to increase our savings and use it for various purposes that would help strengthen our economy," he said.

"In this way, we are not only helping ourselves but also the needy."