

BE WARY OF IRRESPONSIBLE GROUPS

# DON'T BE MISLED:

(P)

# DR MAHATHIR

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ALOR STAR, Sat. — The Prime Minister warned the people today against being misled by certain popular views spread by irresponsible groups for their own selfish ends.

These views have been so skilfully disseminated that they have influenced the majority of the public.

He said the democratic system, which is based on the assumption that the majority is right, has a defect in that "we know that sometimes this is not true."

In the case of the prevailing popular views, the majority of the public had been misled, he said at the speech and prize giving day of the Sekolah Menengah Batu 20, near Kodiang.

Among those present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, Menteri Besar Datuk Osman Aroff, executive councillor Hanafi Ramli and education director

Hashim Mydin.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir in his speech did not say what these "views" were but said that in the case of Islam, it was the popularity of interpretations of the religion "we know to be incorrect".

He said if Muslims had a good grounding in Islam, they would not accept the wrong interpretations.

## Responsible

"It is in this area that teachers, especially those teaching religion, can play their role in ensuring that their pupils acquire the correct knowledge of Islam.

"They must not allow their political leanings to influence the teaching of the subject."

The Prime Minister said children were impressionable and

whatever they learnt from their parents, teachers and environment formed the basis of their personalities.

Just because a person was born into a Muslim family, it did not mean he was a Muslim if he did not gain an impression of Islam and later learn more about it from his teachers.

"Children form their impressions and learn better from what they see. That's why the Government has the slogan 'Leading by Example'," he said.

Parents and teachers have the responsibility of teaching children to be good citizens.

"Whether children grow up into good citizens or otherwise depends on the impressions they get from their parents."

The Prime Minister said the Parent-Teacher

Associations were organisations where parents and teachers could get together to ensure their children become good citizens.

"The future of our nation depends on this. Whether our nation is respected abroad also depends on the character of its people," he said.

Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah later gave away prizes to pupils who did well in their studies last year.