

U E664 AAE  
MAHATHIR-MOSQUE  
BM

KUANTAN, SEPT 7 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY DISMISSED ALLEGATIONS THAT THE RECENT BURNING OF MOSQUES IN PAHANG WAS COMMITTED BY INDONESIAN IMMIGRANTS.

DESCRIBING THE ACUSATIONS AS UNFOUNDED, HE SAID THE AUTHORITIES HAD NOT COME ACROSS ANY EVIDENCE TO SHOW THAT THE INDONESIANS WERE RESPONSIBLE.

THE INDONESIANS CAME TO MALAYSIA BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO EARN A LIVING, HE SAID WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE ALLEGATIONS WHICH WERE SPREAD AMONG THE PEOPLE HERE.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF HIS THREE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO PAHANG, HE SAID THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE INDONESIANS WERE BASELESS BUT IF ANYONE HAD EVIDENCE LINKING THEM TO THE FIRES, THE INFORMATION SHOULD BE PASSED ON TO THE AUTHORITIES FOR ACTION TO BE TAKEN.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE POLICE HAD OBTAINED SOME LEADS ON THE INCIDENTS AND WERE CONTINUING INVESTIGATIONS. -- MORE  
1210MST 07 09 87

U E665 AAE  
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HE SAID THE INFORMATION RECEIVED BY POLICE SO FAR COULD NOT BE DIVULGED AS THE AUTHORITIES WERE STILL WORKING ON THEM.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT TOOK A SERIOUS VIEW OF THE FIRES AND WAS THANKFUL THAT THE PAHANG GOVERNMENT HAD MANAGED TO KEEP THE PEOPLE IN THE STATE CALM.

+WE ARE STILL TRYING TO IDENTIFY THOSE INVOLVED BUT WHAT IS CERTAIN IS THE GROUP RESPONSIBLE IS SMALL,+ HE ADDED.

ON AUG 30, TWO MOSQUES WITHIN 15KM OF EACH OTHER IN PEKAN DISTRICT -- IN MASJID KAMPUNG SERAMBI AND MASJID KAMPUNG TEMIR TENGAH -- WERE SET ON FIRE, WITH THE MOSQUE IN KAMPUNG SERAMBI GUTTED AND THE OTHER PARTIALLY DAMAGED.

THE FOLLOWING DAY THREE MORE MOSQUES -- IN KAMPUNG KUALA TRIANG AND KAMPUNG BOHOR BARU IN TEMERLOH AND KAMPUNG NYAK IN MARAN -- WERE ALSO BURNT. -- MORE

1217MST 07 09 87

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B E703 AAE

ATTN EDITORS: IN BERNAMA ITEM SLUGGED +MAHATHIR-MOSQUE 3  
KUANTAN+ LAST PARA THE WORD +NOT+ WAS DROPPED. HERE CORRECTED  
REPETITION:

MAHATHIR-MOSQUE 3 KUANTAN

POLICE HAVE OFFERED A \$50,000 REWARD FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO  
THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FIRES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO ADVISED THE PEOPLE NOT TO BELIEVE  
REPORTS THAT MANY MALAYS HAD RENOUNCED ISLAM AND EMBRACED  
CHRISTIANITY WHEN THERE WAS NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE ON THIS.

HE SAID SUCH A CLAIM COULD AFFECT THE COUNTRY'S PEACE AND  
STABILITY AS IT COULD CREATE ILL-FEELINGS BETWEEN THE CHRISTAINS AND  
MUSLIMS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PEOPLE OF VARIOUS RACES AND  
FAITHS IN THE COUNTRY HAD FOR A LONG TIME LIVED TOGETHER PEACEFULLY  
BUT THERE WERE NOW QUARTERS TRYING TO DISRUPT THIS HARMONY THROUGH  
SUCH ALLEGATIONS.

+I HAVE HEARD MANY STORIES ON THIS, WITH SOME QUARTERS EVEN  
ALLEGING THAT 66,000 MALAYS HAD EMBRACED CHRISTIANITY BUT DID NOT  
SUBSTANTIATE THEIR CLAIMS WITH PROOF,+ HE SAID. -- MORE (ENDS  
CORRECTED REPETITION)

1616MST 07 09 87

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U E671 AAE

MAHATHIR-MOSQUE 4 KUANTAN

+WHAT I KNOW IS THAT THERE MAY BE NON-MUSLIMS WHO EMBRACED ISLAM  
BECAUSE OF MARRIAGE AND LATER, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF DIVORCE, RETURNED  
TO THEIR FORMER RELIGION,+ HE SAID.

PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WERE MENTERI BESAR DATUK KHALIL  
YAAKOB, CULTURE AND TOURISM MINISTER DATUK SABBARUDDIN CHIK AND  
YOUTH AND SPORTS MINISTER DATUK SERI NAJIB TUN RAZAK. -- BERNAMA  
1247MST 07 09 87