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UMNO-CHRISTIAN R R R

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 26 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT WILL INVESTIGATE A BOOK BROUGHT INTO THE COUNTRY FROM SAUDI ARABIA WHICH LISTS OUT 10 WAYS A MUSLIM APOSTATISES HIMSELF, INCLUDING HIS ACCEPTING A NON-MUSLIM AS A LEADER, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER A MEETING OF THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL HERE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID SUCH CLAIMS COULD HAVE A GREAT EFFECT ON MUSLIMS, PARTICULARLY WHERE THEY FORMED THE MINORITY, AND EVEN AMONG MUSLIMS IN MALAYSIA ITSELF.

+IF SUCH CLAIMS ARE TRUE, WHAT HAPPENS TO THE POSITION OF MUSLIMS WHO FORM THE MINORITY IN COUNTRIES LED BY NON-MUSLIMS?+ HE ASKED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IF THE CLAIMS WERE TRUE, THEN ALL MUSLIMS WHO FORMED THE MINORITY +ARE CLASSIFIED AS APOSTATE, INCLUDING MUSLIMS IN THIS COUNTRY WHICH HAS NON-MUSLIM LEADERS.+ -- MORE

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HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONCERNED OVER RECENT ATTEMPTS BY CERTAIN QUARTERS TO INTERPRET APOSTACY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE HOME MINISTER, SAID THE BOOK WAS NOT SENT TO MALAYSIA BY THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD INVESTIGATE REPORTS ABOUT MALAYS WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE SERVED AS CHRISTIAN PRIESTS BEFORE EMBRACING ISLAM AGAIN.

ON ALLEGATIONS THAT THERE WERE MALAYS WHO HAD EMBRACED CHRISTIANITY, HE SAID THAT SO FAR SUCH CLAIMS HAD NOT BEEN PROVEN.

HE SAID HE HAD NOT MET ANY OF THE MALAYS FROM AMONG THE 2,000 ALLEGED TO HAVE EMBRACED CHRISTIANITY. -- BERNAMA-X-~~6~~-X-X-X6R

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