

ulamak to use Islam wisely

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged the ulamak (religious theologians) to use the Islamic approach wisely to unite and develop the Muslims in the country.

He said the ulamak should follow the wisdom of Prophet Muhammad when implementing Islamic programmes by taking into consideration the situation at that time and the society in terms of social, cultural and mental aspects. "Let us not be arrogant and proud with our religion to the extent that we hurt the feelings of others and deter them from our religion," he added.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the opening of the three-day conference of mosque teachers. About 1,700 participants from all over the country are attending the conference.

He said the failure to use wisdom when carrying out certain responsibilities had resulted in several national and religious programmes being stalled. "Apart from that, there exist certain quarters who took the opportunity from this to further confuse the Muslims, so much so that Muslims fail when faced with the challenges in life.

"They do not use wisdom in the way they spread their teachings but used force," the Prime Minister said.

"Boycotting each other often occurs and this not only divides the Muslims but also gives Islam a bad image.

"This is where the ulamak can bring Muslims back to the right path.

"This is the actual responsibility of an ulamak," he added.

Dr Mahathir also warned the Muslims against people who called themselves ulamak but were actually out to seek personal or group interests.

Dr Mahathir said knowledge without wisdom in carrying out responsibilities would only give rise to negative effects.

"Knowledge in modern times can be easily gained but it will be unfortunate if the irresponsible used them for their own interests.

"There are Jews who gained knowledge on Islam with the intention of running down Islam. They are successful in writing books and pamphlets which often confuse and split the Muslims.

"Therefore, it is important that we be careful in accepting people who are knowledgeable about Islam as ulamak.

"We must study the teachings they bring to us, the interests and the way of life of these people." Dr Mahathir said.