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KOTA BAHARU, JUNE 28, (BERNAMA) -- THE BARISAN NASIONAL (BN) GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY OF ASSIMILATING ISLAMIC VALUES CONSTRUCTIVELY BESIDES ALLOWING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FOR NON-MUSLIMS, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID ISLAM WAS NOT A RELIGION THAT FRIGHTENED PEOPLE.

+WE NEED TO MAKE ALL THE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND ISLAM, BUT WHETHER THEY ACCEPT OR NOT IS A DIFFERENT MATTER,+ HE SAID AT A FUNCTION DURING WHICH 1,000 APPLICATION FORMS TO JOIN UMNO WERE HANDED OVER.

THE FORMS WHICH WERE FROM PAS MEMBERS IN 17 BRANCHES IN KAMPUNG BANGGOL CHE WAN, MERANTI, WERE HANDED OVER BY FORMER PENGHULU YUSOF AWANG AT A CEREMONY HELD AT HIS HOUSE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ISLAM COULD ONLY FLOURISH IN A PEACEFUL SITUATION FREE OF CHAOS. -- MORE
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ALTHOUGH THE ASSIMILATION OF ISLAMIC VALUES WAS IN LINE WITH THE TEACHINGS AND STRUGGLES OF ISLAM, MANY PAS SUPPORTERS AND LEADERS STILL REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE SUCH EFFORT, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PEOPLE COULD SEE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT HAD BEEN DONE BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR ISLAM IN THE COUNTRY.

HE CITED AS EXAMPLES THE SETTING UP OF AN ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY AND ISLAMIC BANK AS WELL AS THE COUNTRY'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ISLAM WHERE MALAYSIA FORWARDED ITS VIEWS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ISLAM.

THE PRIME MINISTER VIEWED IT AS ODD THAT PAS, WHICH CLAIMED TO BE FIGHTING FOR ISLAM, WAS WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE DAP WHICH CLEARLY OPPOSED THE ASSIMILATION OF ISLAMIC VALUES.

HE SAID BY COOPERATING WITH THE DAP AND SEMANGAT 46, PAS' STRUGGLES WERE NOT FOR THE SAKE OF ISLAM BUT FOR ITS OWN AND FOR WINNING THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION. -- MORE.

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HE SAID A GOVERNMENT BASED ON SUCH COOPERATION WOULD NEVER WORK NOR BE ACCEPTED BY THE PEOPLE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE DAP WOULD LEAVE SUCH GOVERNMENT IF WHAT IT COULD NOT GET WHAT IT REQUESTED.

SIMILARLY, IF THE DAP GOT WHAT IT WANTED, PAS WOULD LEAVE AND THAT WOULD BE THE END OF SUCH GOVERNMENT, HE SAID.

EARLIER IN KAMPUNG PECAH PALAS, BUNUT SUSU, TENDONG, THE PRIME MINISTER RECEIVED 196 APPLICATION FORMS FROM FORMER MEMBERS OF PAS AND SEMANGAT 46 TO JOIN UMNO.

THE FORMS WERE HANDED OVER TO HIM BY FORMER HEAD OF PECAH PALAS PAS BRANCH, ENCIK MUSTAFA UMAT. -- BERNAMA.
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