

U E493 AAE
MAHATHIR-ISLAM

BM

KUALA TERENGGANU, OCT 2 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY URGED MUSLIMS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO RESOLVE ANY DISPUTE AMONG THEMSELVES THROUGH CONSULTATION BY USING THE QURAN AND HADIS AS A GUIDE.

CITING THE GULF CRISIS SPARKED OFF BY THE IRAQI INVASION OF KUWAIT AS AN EXAMPLE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE DID NOT SEE HOW MUSLIMS COULD BENEFIT FROM A SPLIT IN THE COMMUNITY.

+WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT DISUNITY AND CONFLICT AMONG OURSELVES WILL ONLY MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE ENEMIES OF ISLAM TO EXPLOIT AND SUPPRESS MUSLIMS AND THEIR NATIONS,+ HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE TERENGGANU ISLAMIC FOUNDATION'S PRINTING COMPLEX AT GONG BADAQ, NEAR HERE.

ALSO PRESENT WERE TERENGGANU MENTERI BESAR TAN SRI HAJI WAN MOKHTAR AHMAD AND MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT DATUK DR YUSOF NOR.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE DEPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN SAUDI ARABIA FOLLOWING THE GULF CRISIS HAD SHOWED HOW NON-MUSLIMS COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MISDEEDS COMMITTED BY MUSLIMS THEMSELVES. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE SPLIT AMONG MUSLIMS HAD BECOME MORE WORRISOME OF LATE WITH THE FORMATION OF VARIOUS SECTS AND GROUPS, INCLUDING POLITICAL ONES.

+THE BIRTH OF SUCH SECTS AND GROUPS WILL ONLY WEAKEN MUSLIMS AND MAKE THEM SUSCEPTIBLE TO BEING USED BY OTHER PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

HE STRESSED THAT THESE FACTIONS COULD BE UNITED UNDER THE ISLAMIC BANNER IF ANY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM WERE SETTLED THROUGH CONSULTATION BY REFERRING TO THE QURAN AND HADIS.

HOWEVER, THE SPLIT WAS AGGRAVATED WHEN CERTAIN GROUPS WITH VESTED INTERESTS MISINTERPRETED THE TEACHINGS OF THE QURAN AND HADIS, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR PRAISED THE TERENGGANU GOVERNMENT FOR SETTING UP THE PRINTING COMPLEX WHICH COULD HELP MAKE AVAILABLE MORE READING MATERIALS WITH THE CORRECT INFORMATION ON ISLAM.

HE REGRETTED THAT LATELY THERE HAD BEEN A PROLIFERATION OF RELIGIOUS BOOKS PUBLISHED BY CERTAIN PARTIES NOT WITH THE AIM OF ENHANCING THE RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSLIMS BUT FOR OTHER REASONS.

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THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO CALLED ON MUSLIMS TO WORK HARDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN VARIOUS FIELDS BECAUSE THEIR WEAKNESS IN VITAL SECTORS LIKE ECONOMY, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY WOULD NOT ATTRACT NON-MUSLIMS TOWARDS ISLAM.

+HOW CAN NON-MUSLIMS BE ATTRACTED TO ISLAM IF ITS FOLLOWERS ARE NOT PEOPLE WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL, HONEST AND UNITED?+ HE ASKED. --

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