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Mahathir - Islam

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KUALA KANGSAR, March 14 (Bernama)

— Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged Malays to be liberal and not to be influenced by a narrow-minded group in the interpretation of Islam to the extent of causing inconvenience to themselves.

He hoped the Malays would not accept the views of the group which interpreted Islam in a narrow way.

Recently the group wanted to help Iraq in the Gulf War by trying to send about 3,000 volunteers.

They sided with Iraq in the war when in the first place Iraq's move to invade Kuwait was wrong, the Prime Minister said when opening the Bendang Kering-Tanjung Belanja road at Kampung Senggang near here.

The Government did not side with anyone for +in our view when Muslims quarrel among themselves we should strive to bring peace to them.+ -- more

♥14/03/13-30MST

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said: +According to Islam we have no right to side with anyone but instead we should advise and strive to resolve the problem by following the path of peace.+

He said the group sided with Iraq only because it opposed the Federal Government.

+..because they were angry with the Federal Government they wanted to send 3,000 people who had no skills in warfare to that place, luckily it did not materialise otherwise they will not have returned,+ he said.

The Prime Minister said the group in the past because of its narrow thinking had opposed the government's development efforts such as the building of roads for the convenience of the people.

They now had the opportunity to administer a state in the country and +we want to see whether they build roads or not.+ -- more

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When they came to power it appeared they were making decisions in the name of religion but then they went back on their decisions.

Initially they proposed to disallow women from working at night but not so long, after the proposal was withdrawn.

The Prime Minister also urged the rural community to make intensive use of their land to enhance their economic status.

The government was building roads not merely as a communication link but also to provide an opportunity to the people to increase their income through commerce and agriculture, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

The building of roads would push up the value of rural land and facilitate cultivation and marketing of produce, he said.

Perak Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib said at the function that the government had spent \$258 million under the Fifth Malaysia Plan to build 30 bridges and 400 kilometres of roads in the state as well as maintaining 1,200 kilometres of roads.

The 47km Bandang Kering-Tanjung Belanja road costing \$10.7 million was completed last year.

It benefits more than 10,000 people along the Sungai Perak between Parit and Kuala Kangsar. -- Bernama

♥14/03/14-06MST