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Mahathir - Islam

(EMBARGO: For release after 10pm, Sept 2)

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 2 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight Islam has enough philosophy and teachings to bring progress to its followers but what is restricting their progress is interpretation which only stresses on the aspects of the hereafter.

+The problem with us is that while we are Muslims, we actually do not practise the teachings of Islam apart from the worship for the hereafter, as though progress and what is done in this world has no relevance to the hereafter,+ he said on RTM's +Wawancara+ programme over TV1.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the progress achieved before by Muslims could now no longer be attained because of the interpretations which stressed only on certain aspects.

+There is no balance between the world and the hereafter ... this is the problem,+ he said.

The Prime Minister said he could not accept the notion that progress was not synonymous with Islam as Muslims too had a right to progress. -- more

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Mahathir - Islam 2 Kuala Lumpur (embargo)

The Prime Minister said comparing Islam with poverty was a humiliation to Islam which had never urged its followers to stagnate.

He said it was also inaccurate to say that if a person was poor he would enter heaven, and gave a reminder that poverty would bring a person closer to losing his faith.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said whether a person was a Muslim or not depended on his belief in the religion and on religious interpretations which were not made with vested interests.

People who wished to suppress Muslims would much prefer Muslims to be stupid, he said adding that this was not a requirement of Islam but of such people.

+In Islam, we are urged to be united and seek progress,+ he said, adding that if progress was achieved, the world would look upon Islam as a religion that ensured progress and happiness in this world and the hereafter.

He said that in the past, Muslims had achieved more progress than non-Muslims to the extent that they lost sight of their bearings and declined to the present level.

The Prime Minister said it was inaccurate to say that progress in the West was due to Jewish-Christian philosophy and progress in the East was due to the Confucian Philosophy.

This was evident from the fact that olden day Arabs achieved progress after embracing Islam and were able to conquer more than half the world and made advances in science, medicine and administration, he said.

He said that he was recently informed by a non-Muslim that International Law was based on Islamic Law.

The Prime Minister said what became a problem to Muslims at present was that the current teachings stressed more on the form of Islam and not Islamic practices. -- Bernama

♥02/09/19 31MST