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MAHATHIR SAYS MUSLIMS WEAKENED BY IMBALANCE TN WORLDLY, RELIGIOUS GOALS

Mahathir-Umno (Islam)

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KUALALUMPUR, Nov 8, (Bernama) -- Umno President, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said today Muslims are a weak and backward group because of their failure to strike a balance between worldly interests and the demand of the Islamic religion to prepare for life hereafter.

This stemmed from the erroneous teachings of some +ulama+ who incorrectly defined +Ad-deen+ or way of **life to** mean that they should focus on preparations for the hereafter, he added.

+If anyone who talks or strives for happiness in the world, the ulama will accuse him of erring and being unIslamic because, for the ulama, Ad-deen means 1-0 prepare to face the end of life only, he said when opening the Umno General Assembly in the Dewan Merdeka of the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said religious teachers who taught Muslims not to strive with determination were shallow, arrogant and proud.

He added: +It is the teachings of these ulama that cause Muslims to finish their life solely in making preparations to face the hereafter to the extent that they do not have time to seek worldly success. -- more

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+If they are students, they give up their studies and employees neglect the work entrusted to them.+

As a result, he said, Muslim countries rich in resources bestowed by God were forced to seek help from non-Muslim countries when they were attacked by another Muslim country that was greedy.

+Indirectly, this placed Muslim countries under the finger of non-Muslim countries and the greedy country was severely defeated, weakened and condemned by the world, + he added

The Prime Minister said Muslims should emulate the struggles of Prophet Muhammad who spread the teachings of Islam until he succeeded in making Muslims a race that was strong and knowledgeable and the Islamic empire. one that was outstanding and in the forefront of other religions in the world of knowledge.

He said if the Arabs in those days were only concerned about preparing themselves for the hereafter and backward in navigation, they would not have been able to venture out of Mekah and Madinah on explorations that brought them to Malaya. -- more

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+Tf they only focus on preparing for the hereafter, the Malays today would still be praying to mounds and trees,+ he said,

Regretfully, the Malays today did not consider themselves as being entrusted to advance in order to be more capable of spreading Tslam, he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir stressed that Islam was not handicapped and had never prevented its followers from seeking worldly success.

The handicapped were those who made interpretations that caused Muslims to practice a way of life that hampered their progress, he added.

+It is only through guidance by the true Islamic teachings which did not reject success in the world that the plan for Malays to progress can be implemented effectively,+ he said.

In his hour-long address, the Prime Minister also touched on the responsibilities of party members and urged them to strive harder to bring about a new Malay and Bumiputera race, one which possessed a culture in keeping with the times, willing to face challenges, able to compete without assistance, knowledgeable and educated, advanced, sincere, disciplined, trustworthy and diligent. -- more

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+All Umno members must consider their task to create Malays and Bumiputeras of the 21st century as a +jihad+ (holy war) because it is a noble struggle to safeguard the Islamic belief and religion among Bumiputeras and other Muslims,+ he said.

He said the era where Muslims quarrelled with one another and blindly made enemies with non-Muslims was over.

He ended his speech with this emphasis: +We have no time for interpretations of Tslam that are nonsense. We have no time to scramble for positions for ourselves. We do not need to ask who will replace whom. We do not need cliques and teams. We do not need to waste time with all sorts of speculation.+-- Bernama

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