

Islam not against worldly Success: Mahathir

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said 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 **ulamas** who incorrectly defined **Ad-deen** or way of life to mean that they should focus on preparations for the hereafter, the Prime Minister and Umno president 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 to prepare to face the end of life only," he said.

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

"It is the teachings of these **ulamas** 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," he said.

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

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 community **that** was strong and knowledgeable and the Islamic empire one that was outstanding and at 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, they would not have ventured out of Mecca and Medina on explorations that brought them to Malaya.

"If they only **focussed** 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** Islam, he added.

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 **practise** a way of life that hampered their progress, he said.

"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. — Bernama