

# PM: Keep focus on bigger issues

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Muslims should not place too much importance on trivial matters to the extent that they forget their bigger responsibilities, particularly pertaining to development.

"We often concentrate on trivial issues but the much bigger ones such as the capability of Muslims in industrial development is ignored," he said.

"Today the world is witnessing with sadness the murder, torture and rape of Muslims in Bosnia.

Dr Mahathir said nothing could be done by the 1,000 million Muslims because no Muslim country had developed a strong and sophisticated military capability.

Such a situation persisted because of the misconception among Muslims regarding industrial development. Most of them assumed that industrial development had nothing to do with Islam, he added.



Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM)

The Prime Minister said this in his speech when opening the conference on *Islam and Industrialisation* organised by the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia at Bank Negara here.

Dr Mahathir said the defence industry was extremely important for the Muslim community.

Since the Muslims had not given enough emphasis to industries, a sophisticated defence industry could not be established, he added.

He said it must be noted, however, that the industry could not exist without the

existence of thousands of other types of industries.

Dr Mahathir, however, agreed that it was not proper for industries to be established and managed solely to amass wealth without considering the community's social needs.

He said profits should not only be gained but should also be spent on research and development to improve the services provided by industries so that they would be more efficient and cheap.

"By investing the profits, more can be derived and at the same time the services

too will be better.

"This does not mean that industries for the Muslims should be for charity because Islam does not oppose the pursuit of reasonable profit," he added.

He said industry would continue to play its role as the provider of services to the community. No industry would succeed if it did not produce something which was required by the people.

Dr Mahathir told the participants that without industries, Muslims would face extreme difficulty in their devotion to the religion. He cited the weaving industry as being important because the products were used to cover oneself daily and when praying.

As for aircraft, its creation had enabled more Muslims to perform the Haj faster in modern times, he said.

Citing another example, he said the construction industry had enabled Muslims to pray in mosques which could now accommodate more people.