

CNS1919

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(EMBARGO: For release on the Eve of Hari Raya Puasa)

Mahathir - message

MALAYSIAN MUSLIMS SHOULD BE GRATEFUL AS THEY DO NOT HAVE MAJOR PROBLEMS

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Muslims in Malaysia should be grateful because on the whole they are not faced with major problems which frequently assail other Muslims and Muslim countries.

The Prime Minister said by virtue of the strong economy and political stability, Muslims in this country were endowed by Allah with all kinds of opportunities and benefits.

"We live in an environment of peace and harmony among Muslims and non-Muslims," he said in his Hari Raya message over Radio and TV Malaysia.

He said Muslims should feel grateful because this country was free from serious calamities like cyclones, floods or earthquakes or volcanoes or civil war.

"The truth is that a sizeable portion of our prosperity and stability is the result of our approach, attitude and efforts," he said.

"Praise be to Allah for there are signs and evidence that our efforts have succeeded in putting our nation and people and with that our religion at a higher level of esteem," Dr Mahathir said. -- more

▼23/03/18-21MST

CNS1933

U GE 23-03 00158 EF870

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Mahathir - message 2 Kuala Lumpur (Embargo)

The Prime Minister said other Muslims countries now accepted the role that Muslims in Malaysia played in the attempt by the Ummah in general to bring back the Golden Age of Islam.

He said although Malaysia's success was acknowledged even by other Muslims, Malaysia was still far from achieving its objective far from the level necessary to preserve Islam, the race and the country.

For continued peace and increasing prosperity, greater efforts by all parties were crucial including the government, the private sector, the workers and the general public.

Dr Mahathir said efforts required patience, concentration and sacrifices, all of which were characteristics which developed with the act of fasting.

"While we should be grateful, we should not however rest and wallow in complacency because we believe that everything is predestined by Allah," he said. -- more

▼23/03/18-35MST

CNS1946
U GE 23-03 00140 EF871
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Mahathir - message 3 Kuala Lumpur (Embargo)

"Predestination does not mean that since things will happen because they have been preordained, we should not do anything to influence events."

"In actual fact those very events resulting from our efforts are also preordained," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government gave equal emphasis on success in this world and the hereafter for, according to the Prime Minister, to neglect worldly success would certainly affect Muslims' success in the life hereafter.

He said Muslims were humiliated because they were poor whether materially or in terms of knowledge or in the ability to manufacture goods or in the area technology.

"That is why Islam regards poverty as a threat to the faith of Muslims," Dr Mahathir said. -- more

▼23/03/18-46MST

CNS1961
U GE 23-03 00136 EF872
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Mahathir - message 4 Kuala Lumpur (Embargo)

The Prime Minister said, "We need to make preparations. No other preparations are more important and effective than shaping a character that is consistent with the objectives. For that reason fasting plays an important role. A lot can be learnt from the act of fasting."

Dr Mahathir said Muslims who learnt the lessons of sacrifice and achieve self-discipline by fasting would become more humane, grateful and ready to face challenges.

"They are bound to become more successful and will earn high respect and esteem," he said.

"Among some successful non-Muslims, we notice how they have not only lost faith in their religion but they have also lost their moral and ethical values," he said. -- more

▼23/03/19-01MST

CNS1980

U GE 23-03 00216 EF873

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Mahathir - message 5 Kuala Lumpur (Embargo)

The emergence and spread of AIDS, for instance, was the result of homosexuality, promiscuity and the breakdown of the institutions of marriage and the family.

"But if education and religious teachings are focused not only on the performance of religious rituals and life after death, but also on moral values and the attitudes necessary in facing challenges in this modern world, God Willing, if we become developed, we will not discard those moral values which protect us from being destroyed by our success and our wealth," Dr Mahathir said.

He said Muslims should remember that only if they were successful could they help protect other Muslims from being oppressed as with the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina and elsewhere.

"As we celebrate this Hari Raya, we ought to give precedence to family ethics. We know how important the family is in safeguarding our morals and our traditions."

"The custom of returning to the kampung on Hari Raya is a good custom. It revives and preserves the family values as enjoined by Islam and our culture. It contributes to the shaping of an honourable personality which we need in order to build an honourable and respected society."-- more

▼23/03/19-22MST

CNS1983

U GE 23-03 00198 EF874

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Mahathir - message 6 (last) Kuala Lumpur (Embargo)

"Only I pray that we are all careful. Everytime we celebrate Hari Raya and return to the kampungs there may be accidents. Maybe this is also fated. However if we are not hasty and more careful and cautious, the tragedy of accidents on the roads will be reduced."

"What is there if we are late several minutes or hours? In the end we will still reach our destination. Do not turn the joy of our waiting family and parents into sadness because we met our death on the road."

"I would also like to this opportunity to wish Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri to all Muslims in Malaysia and also to those who are on duty and studying overseas. We also honour members of the security forces and staff of certain departments who are carrying out their official duties as usual on this Hari Raya."

"To non-Muslims I believe they will celebrate the Hari Raya together with their Muslim friends."

"Finally, my family and I seek forgiveness for whatever mistakes that we may have done." -- Bernama

02/02/10-25MST