

PM: There are no major

Be grateful,

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By 
Tengku Sharifuddin

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Muslims in Malaysia should be grateful because on the whole they are not faced with major problems which frequently assail other Muslims and Islamic countries, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

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

"We live in an environment of peace and harmony, including between Muslims and non-Muslims," Dr Mahathir said in his Hari Raya message over Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM).

"We should also feel grateful because our country is free from serious calamities like cyclones, floods, earthquakes or volcanoes with lava flowing for miles and miles, destroying houses and trees and killing thousands of people.

"In addition, we are not attacked or conquered by enemies or confronted with civil war. If ever there is a society which should be grateful in this critical age for Muslims, we should be the one," he added.

Dr Mahathir, however, said Muslims should not be complacent because of the belief that everything was pre-destined by Allah.

"Pre-destination does not mean that since things will happen because they have been preordained, we

should not do anything to influence events," he said.

"In actual fact, those very events resulting from our efforts are also preordained. This is because sometimes, despite our efforts, the results that we hope for are not achieved because that is the way it is fated to be.

"But it is more likely to happen because of our efforts than if we make no effort but merely hope that the benefits will fall into our laps."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's prosperity and stability were achieved as a result of its approach, attitude and efforts towards national development.

Greater efforts by the Government, private sector, the workers and the public were crucial if the country were to continue to enjoy peace and increasing prosperity, he added.

"Efforts require patience, concentration and sacrifice, all of which are characteristics which develop with the act of fasting," he said. "For fasting brings with it benefits which are far more than the rewards in the after-life."

Dr Mahathir said other Muslim countries now accepted the role Malaysia played in the attempt by the Ummah in general to bring back the Golden Age of Islam.

He added that there were signs and evidence that the country's efforts had succeeded in putting the nation and its people, and Islam, at

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problems but plenty of opportunities

Muslims told

Don't neglect religion, Dr M tells Muslims!

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a higher level of esteem.
"This has placed on our shoulder a great responsibility which we cannot neglect because this responsibility is a part of our duty to Allah."

Malaysia, he said, gave equal emphasis on success in this world as well as in the other world.

"To neglect our worldly success will certainly affect our success in the life hereafter. That is why Islam regards poverty as a threat to the faith of Muslims."

Dr Mahathir said the reason why Muslims were humiliated was that they were poor, whether materially or in terms of knowledge or the ability to manufacture goods or technology.

On the other hand, he said, it was possible to achieve worldly success and wealth without having to forego religious duties.

Dr Mahathir said the greatest fear when achieving worldly success was the tendency for successful societies to neglect religion.

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

"The emergence and spread of AIDS for instance is 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 the modern world, God willing, if we become developed, we will not discard those moral values which can protect us from being destroyed by our success and our wealth.

"Therefore, we should not be afraid of success in this world."

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

He said that although Malaysia's success was acknowledged even by other Muslims, "we are still far from our objective, far from the level necessary to preserve our religion and nation".

"God willing, if we can learn from the practice of fasting, there is a great chance that we will achieve our goal."

The Prime Minister said the country needed to prepare for more development. No other preparations were more important and effective than shaping a character that was consistent with the objectives.

"For that reason fasting plays an important role. A lot can be learnt from the act of fasting.

"While we celebrate our success in completing the 30 days of fasting, the many lessons of fasting and the discipline that goes with it should not be forgotten."

Dr Mahathir also reminded road users to exercise caution when travelling back to their *kampung* to celebrate the Hari Raya.

"Everytime we celebrate Hari Raya and return to the *kampung* there will be accidents. Maybe this is also fated. But if we are not hasty and are more careful and cautious, the tragedy of accidents on the roads will be reduced.

"Let us be late as long we are safe. Hari Raya is for enjoyment and not grieving for lost ones."

The Prime Minister also conveyed Hari Raya greetings to members of the security forces and the staff of certain departments who are carrying out their duties as usual on this Hari Raya.