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Mahathir-Quran

GO BACK TO THE QURAN AND REINTERPRETE IT CORRECTLY, SAYS MAHATHIR

⁹⁴ KUALA LUMPUR, Feb.2 (Bernama) -- Muslims must go back to the Quran and ^Preinterprete it correctly in order to revive the period of Islamic glory, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

It was important for Muslims to disregard interpretations made by some ulamas after the period of Islamic glory as evidence showed that they were more interested in preserving their influence over the Ottoman Government than in making the correct interpretation, he added.

"Thus, seeing that the Christian churches had lost their influence after the separation of the church from the state, they condemned the learning of non-religious subjects in the hope that those with such knowledge do not emerge to displace them," he said when opening the Fourth International Seminar on the Quran at the Islamic Centre here.

Dr Mahathir said these ulamas condemned all such learnings as secular and proscribed and, as a result, Muslims who used to lead the world in the arts and sciences began to lag behind non-Muslims.

Eventually, almost every Muslim country fell under the rule of Western imperialists, he added. -- more

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Mahathir-Quran 2 Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir said the interpretations of these ulamas were clearly self-serving but, unfortunately, their teachings were still largely accepted today.

As such, the interpretations of the Quran must be in the interest of Islam and the Muslims, he added.

He said: "They must take into consideration the current situation. They must not be made to serve the interests of those who interpret them or of any individual or group or political faction."

It was also no longer possible to confine the interpretation of the teachings of the Quran to religious scholars only, he added.

He said the problems of today required that scholars of other disciplines be also involved in the interpretations. -- more

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Mahathir-Quran 3 Kuala Lumpur

The progress in medical science, genetics, space exploration, commerce and industry required deep knowledge in the subjects in order to relate to the teachings of the Quran.

"If they are not, then there is a grave danger of the Quran being regarded by some Muslims as irrelevant. The non-Muslims might even ridicule it," he added.

The Prime Minister said the Quran should also not be interpreted literally as it would limit the vast lessons that were contained in it for the Muslim ummah and for humanity.

"To do so would make the Quran misleading and out of date. And the Quran is far from being misleading or out of date," he added, stressing that it was the interpreters who were misleading, lacking in knowledge and out of date.

He said while the Quran was never wrong, it was, however, possible for those who study, analyse and interpret the contents of the Quran to be wrong. -- more

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Mahathir-Quran 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

It was for those reasons that different sects emerged among the Muslims with different interpretations of the teachings of the Quran, the Hadith and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

"These differences in interpretation are possible because in many instances the Quran gives general guidance which covers every kind of situation," he added.

Unfortunately, he said, there was a tendency among some sects and some ulamas to be rigid in their interpretations and to believe only in their own interpretations.

He added that it was such people who caused misunderstandings among Muslims, resulting not only in the division into sects and groups but also conflicts and wars.

He said these divisions and conflicts among Muslims were obviously not due to the Quran but were entirely due to bigotry on the part of the imams and ulamas. -- Bernama

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