

Dr M: Be thankful for blessings

LANGKAWI, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight that Muslims in the country will be more appreciative of the peacefulness of the country if they take a closer look at the hardships faced by Muslims in turbulent nations.

"In Malaysia, we live in an atmosphere in which nobody feels threatened. We have fasted for 18 days without any disturbance.

"We also have sufficient food to break fast and we can gather without any problem."

However, Dr Mahathir reminded them not to be complacent.

"In other countries, Muslims do not enjoy such luxuries. They cannot taste a perfect life," he said after breaking fast with about 1,000 Muslims at the Al-Aqna mosque in Temoyong.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid and State Exco members.

He noted the suppression, victimisation, starvation and conflicts faced by Muslims in turbulent countries.

In some countries, Muslims even waged war against other Muslims to gain power.

"They have gone to the extent of hijacking and bombing planes and killing innocent people. They vent their hatred against others by even killing women and children."

Dr Mahathir also drew attention to the fate of Muslims in Chechnya and Bosnia where they were being slaughtered by the enemies of Islam.

"In Somalia, millions die of starvation, but in Malaysia we feel safe. We can perform our religious obligations without difficulty and thousands perform the umrah every year," he said.

Dr Mahathir said all Muslims should be grateful for the peaceful situation in Malaysia.

On Langkawi, he said: "I worked on this island in 1956 and I still remember cycling from Kuah to Padang Matsirat. I also experienced driving an ambulance to Ewa which was then considered a remote area.

"Today, Langkawi boasts concrete houses. People on the mainland do not have as many concrete houses as Langkawi residents."

He said things had improved in Langkawi to the extent that even a *goreng pisang* seller could earn as much as RM30 to RM40 a day.