

Dr Mahathir Mohamed

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Dr M: Stop linking Muslims with terrorism

By Saiful Azhar Abdullah

ALOR STAR, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged the West to stop associating terrorism with Muslims and Islamic countries.

He said Malaysia was concerned with the prevailing trend of the West in blaming Muslims and Islamic countries for acts of terrorism.

"Whenever there is an act of terrorism, the first thing they do is to point their fingers at Muslims and Islamic countries, although the culprits were their own people," Dr Mahathir said after inspecting Sungai Kedah's recreational project at Ampang Jajar here.

He was asked by reporters to comment on the prevailing trend among the Western countries in associating Muslims and Islamic countries with terrorism.

"That has been the trend among the West for a long time and it is getting more conspicuous now and we believe we will continue to be their target in future," he added.

Dr Mahathir made it clear that Malaysia had always condemned terrorism.

"We don't agree with terrorism ... we condemn terrorism by anyone, but it is improper to tag terrorism with Muslims because terrorism occurs anywhere," he added.

Dr Mahathir said even some non-Muslims resorted to terrorism to express their dissatisfaction.

He cited the Baader Meinhof gang in Germany and a group in Japan which propagated terrorism by encouraging the members to kill others as examples of terrorism among the non-Muslims.

"Don't associate terrorism with Muslims and think that all terrorists are Muslims. Those who are not satisfied with certain things will also resort to violence," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should be grateful there was no violence in this country.

"In those days, we had problems with the communist terrorists, but we have resolved them," he added.

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Plan to beautify all rivers in the country

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On his visit to Sungai Kedah, Dr Mahathir said the Government would develop the river into a tourist area.

He said all this while the river had been used by the public to dump rubbish and wastes.

Dr Mahathir said efforts were being made to clean up the river by aerating the water.

He said a private firm, Bridgecon Berhad, had contributed to the clean-up effort by providing a machine to do the job.

"Our intention is to beautify all the rivers in Malaysia," said the Prime Minister, adding that from now on all bridges to be constructed across rivers must meet a standard height to make the river passable to boats.

Dr Mahathir said previously, the bridges at highways and some rivers were built too low above the surface. In the case of rivers these bridges made them impassable to boats and that hampered efforts to develop the rivers into tourist areas.

The Prime Minister said rivers could be profitable tourist areas if beautified and provided with adequate facilities.

For Sungai Kedah, Dr Mahathir said a boardwalk and a hawkers' plaza were among the facilities to be built to attract visitors.

He said the Government would provide the funds if necessary for the beautification of the river but he hoped the private sector would take up the task to develop rivers.