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Mahathir-Problems

GOVT WANTS TO NIP IN THE BUD INTOLERANT ATTITUDE

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight that he concentrated on Islam in his policy address at the Umno General Assembly today to nip in the bud problems that may arise over any intolerant attitude on the part of Muslims in the country.

The government wanted to act fast before it got out of hand and endangered national security, he said at a news conference at the end of the first day of the Umno General Assembly session.

The Prime Minister and Umno President said Malaysia had been successful this far because the government had been able to detect the signs and symptoms of impending problems at an early stage.

"We believe in dealing with a problem at the earliest stage as possible. It is not happening now, it may not happen for many years to come but before it becomes a serious threat we deal with it."

He said this when asked to explain why he devoted a large portion of his speech to warning the people of the dangers that would arise if Muslims become intolerant.

"I was trained as a doctor and we recognise things very early," Dr Mahathir said

As to why he did not touch on the state of the economy in his speech this morning, Dr Mahathir said he had spoken specifically on the subject when he addressed the delegates at a pre-assembly session on Wednesday.

"I explained at length the economic issues at that meeting," he said.

His policy address at the assembly today was wholly on religion, language, culture and corruption.

The Prime Minister also said the government was ready to study the proposal for the setting up of a trust agency to help develop Malay reserve land and safeguard their property.

The proposal for such a body came from the delegate from Kedah Datuk Haji Badruddin Haji Amiruldin who also criticised the formation of ad hoc committees to handle particular problems.

Dr Mahathir said at times the role of such committees was important in handling a problem and taking action on behalf of the government. --

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