

07 MAY 1997

Mahathir-Maal Hijrah

MAHATHIR: ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE TO PROTECT MUSLIMS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has urged Muslims to acquire as much knowledge and skills as possible to design, manufacture and use modern tools to safeguard themselves.

He said although they were aware that their security was their own responsibility, Muslims still depended on others to protect them and made no effort to bear that responsibility.

"It will not do by just basking in other Muslims' adulation of us if we still fail in carrying out obligations as required by Islam," Dr Mahathir said in his message to mark the 1418 Maal Hijrah or the advent of the 1418 Muslim new year.

He said Muslims should acquire wealth without which it would be impossible to manufacture the equipment required to protect themselves.

Peace and political stability were pre-requisites to enrichment of a nation, he said adding that the Quran repeatedly emphasises that God chastises trouble-makers.

Dr Mahathir said much of Islamic teachings was being neglected as Muslims only concentrated on certain religious aspects and on accusing others as being less holy than them.

He noted that Muslims mostly put trivial matters first to the extent of neglecting key elements in Islam such as Muslim brotherhood.

Dr Mahathir said what was actually meant by Hijrah is improving the lot of Muslims by striving to enrich them in terms of knowledge, skills and money.

"Although we observe Maal Hijrah every year, we celebrate it without making any point to learn from Prophet Muhammad's flight from Mekah to Madinah," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Muslims would lose out if they did not apply Prophet Muhammad hijrah incident to serve as a beacon in the journey through life of a Muslim individual, society and nation. -- BERNAMA

MS RN