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Mahathir-Message

MUSLIMS MUST PROGRESS TO GAIN RESPECT, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, April 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Muslims in the country should strive for progress in all fields including Information Technology (IT) to gain respect for themselves and the religion.

"We are confident that if Muslims attain success and progress and are fair and just, others will have the greatest respect for us and our religion," he said.

Muslims and Islam would not be respected and highly regarded if they resorted to violence and hostility, he said in his message to Muslims in the country in conjunction with Hari Raya Aidil Adha tomorrow.

Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, wished all Muslims Selamat Hari Aidil Adha.

He said that the Muslim population in this Islamic country must show that they are not only progressive and dynamic but also tolerant and fair to others.

The Prime Minister also said that national stability in this Islamic country which is multi-religious and multi-cultural is proof of the capability of Muslims to rule the country with justice and efficiency.

It is clear that the Muslim-led administration is capable of developing the country more rapidly than most other countries and this showed that Muslims are not less capable than others, he said.

Dr Mahathir said that only what is required is an awareness which is advocated by Islam.

He said that if there are Muslim countries facing instability and underdevelopment, it is because of the refusal of Muslims to accept and practise the teachings of Islam.

"Instead, they adopt an extremist attitude and are intolerant, claiming that Islam calls for Muslims not to be friends with all non-Muslims," he said.

In this respect, he reminded Muslims not to be extremists so that the country would remain peaceful to enable Malaysia to forge ahead and gain the respect of not only Muslim nations but also non-Muslim countries.

Dr Mahathir also said that Muslims in the country should be prepared to make sacrifices for the sake of the success of Muslims and Islam.

"If Muslims in the country are ever willing to make sacrifices in the interest of the religion, race and nation, Muslims and Islam will be more respected by the world," he said.

The Prime Minister also called on Muslims in the country to pray for the safe return of Malaysians on pilgrimage in the Holy Land. -- BERNAMA

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