

Dr M: Rid mosques²² of 'undesirables'

By MERGAWATI ZULFAKAA

KUALALUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has warned certain quarters against using mosques for political purposes or to spread extremist teachings.

"We must get rid of them in whatever way," Dr Mahathir said when opening the Masjid Bukit Aman at the Federal Police Headquarters here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Home Minister, said there were efforts by certain quarters to use the mosques to fan hatred among the people and create chaos in the country.

"We must stop this trend from spreading; especially by those who use the Friday sermon to instigate hatred," he added.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Jhrahim, Special Functions Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Hamid Othman and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Rahim Nor.

They later performed Friday

prayers with some 1,300 police personnel.

The Prime-Minister said some mosques were being used by certain people to criticise others and make baseless allegations for their political agenda and not for Islam.

"Mosques are not being used to instil unity but instead bring more bad things to the *ummah*.

"We see in some countries, extremists willing to kill other Muslims because they think the rest are less Islamic than them.

"There are those who interpreted the religion to oppress women because they feel that women are inferior," he added.

If women were sidelined, society would lose out in terms of their contribution.

"The Muslim *ummah* becomes weaker not because we are weak but because of our own doing," he said.

"We can't deny Muslims like those in Bosnia and Kosovo are oppressed, but we have to admit that part of the reason we are weak is because we do not practise the true teachings of Islam and busy arguing as well as following teachings which go against the religion."

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