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Mahathir-Science

SCIENCE NOT A SECULAR SUBJECT, MUSLIMS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, July 13 (Bernama) -- Muslims should not interpret science as an unIslamic and secular subject, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

"Science is not secular at all because we are encouraged by our religion to study not just the Al-Quran and Hadith but also the nature and surroundings," he said.

"We believe that science is what we learn from the Europeans, whereas science is originally from Muslim scholars," he said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at a dinner at the Putra World Trade Centre held in conjunction with the Langkawi International Islamic Science and Technology Exhibition and Conference to be held in October.

The conference is jointly organised by the Langkawi Accommodation for Visiting Academics (LAVA), Institute of Islamic Understanding, Malaysia, Malaysia Industrial-Government Group for High Technology and Eeman Consult.

Dr Mahathir said it was time for Muslims to master various subjects in sciences so they would be able to progress, develop and be on par with Non-Muslim communities.

He said Muslims usually failed to study science thoroughly because they thought that the knowledge of science was not Islamic.

"Looking back at the Renaissance period it can be seen that Europeans had learned a lot about scientific discoveries from the Muslim world."

"We are not talking about an Islamic science or a different science but it is the same science as we learn today," he said.

He said it was the early Muslims who studied and developed scientific subjects such as algebra, physics and so on but Muslims today however had lost sight of the skills and knowledge of science and were letting it to be monopolized by Non-Muslims.

"The science that we learn today is mostly that founded by Muslim scholars of the past, but gradually Muslim communities today had changed and it appears that science is foreign to them," Dr Mahathir said.

"I'm sure that many present day Muslim scholars are capable of mastering and developing many of the scientific subjects. And I'm sure this will make Muslims equal to other scholars in the world."

Dr Mahathir regarded the upcoming exhibition and conference as the "reawakening of interest in science and technology and in the potentials of science and technology for the development of the human race and in industry and commerce".

"If LISTEC (Langkawi Islamic Science and Technology Exhibition and Conference) succeeds in increasing the interest of Muslims in this field and in encouraging Muslims to work with Non-Muslims in science, commerce and technology, then LISTEC will have done a great service to Muslims," he said.

The conference was aimed at bringing together scientists, technologists and entrepreneurs from Muslim and Non-Muslim countries.

The conference, themed "Science and technology and the Islamic business communities towards global networking and partnership", will be held in Langkawi in October.

Also present at the dinner were Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid and his wife and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abdul Hamid Othman.

Dr Mahathir also launched the LISTEC homepage 1998.

-- BERNAMA
WNZ AAM