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Mahathir-Lies

CLAIMS BY "ULAMAS" CAN LEAD TO MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RIOTS - DR M

KUANTAN, Sept 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today a lie by people claiming to be ulamas that there are more churches than mosques in Melaka is dangerous as it can make non-Muslims feel threatened and lead to riots.

"If this is spread and magnified there will surely be riots between Muslims and Christians," the prime minister said at a meeting with Pahang Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders here.

Present were Pahang BN chairman Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Adnan Yaakob, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman and former deputy prime minister Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba.

Dr Mahathir also accused supporters of an opposition party of using the pulpits of mosques to spread lies to Muslims to incite hatred against the BN.

He said Umno had never resorted to arousing hatred against PAS in efforts to gain support for itself, and wished to see all Muslims live in brotherhood among themselves and with non-Muslims.

"We (Umno) are for peace order in this country but PAS is different, they prefer enmity among Muslims themselves and between Muslims and non-Muslims," he said.

Dr Mahathir said people who were prepared to tell lies from mosque pulpits were not fit to be called ulamas as they did not respect the mosque or the faithful present.

"These people claim themselves to be ulamaks. If these are the type of ulamaks we have, believe me our religion will be destroyed and there will be riots in our country, and these people won't take responsibility if riots happen," he said.

The prime minister said the government respected ulamaks but not all who claimed themselves to be ulamaks, as there were liars who call themselves ulamaks.

He related a story once told by a former Umno member, the late Sulaiman Palestin, of a liar claiming himself to be a ulamak and using deceit to legitimise what was 'haram' (forbidden in Islam).

He likened the story to misinterpretations about Islam made by PAS ulamas now to the extent of claiming that profanities were allowed.

"Just to fish for votes, they are prepared to make all sorts of interpretations," he said.

The people, he said, should be aware of such tactics by PAS and reject the party during the general election.

Dr Mahathir said he believed the people would not support the opposition pact in the election as the four parties involved could not form a government as they had differing struggles and were even opposed to each other in certain areas.

He said the parties -- PAS, DAP, Parti Keadilan Nasional and Parti Rakyat Malaysia -- wished to join force to fight the BN because they found the BN formula to be effective.

"An imitation product has no quality, go for the original which is Barisan Nasional," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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