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Act to better lot of the ummah, PM advises Muslims

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Muslims must be willing to act to better their lot even if their actions exposed them to danger.

He said they should also place importance on Muslim brotherhood and unity to improve the lot of the ummah.

Dr Mahathir said there were lessons to be learnt from Prophet Muhammad's hijrah (flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina) 1,421 years ago.

"Processions and display of Quranic verses are not that important," he said in his Maal Hijrah message.

Dr Mahathir said the Maal Hijrah celebration was meaningful to Muslims as it provided guidance for them to deal with life's problems.

If Muslims can, while celebrating Maal Hijrah, understand the true lessons from the Prophet's hijrah, then the celebration will not be in vain.

"Instead, it would bring many benefits to Muslims. As such, use this year's Maal Hijrah as the starting point to take steps towards improving ourselves and the ummah in this country."

The Prime Minister said if Muslims understood the true lessons in the Prophet's hijrah, they would surely act to change their fate and they would return to the glorious era of Islam.

Muslims now face many problems.

"They are not progressive, are weak, have little knowledge and skills, are divided, do not know how to reap from God-given wealth, are oppressed, are used by people to fight other Muslims and much else."

He said if Muslims accepted the Prophet's hijrah as sunnah, they would not only always be asking God to bring back Islam's glorious past but would also strive to save themselves and to progress.

"Allah will not change our fate if we do not try to do so ourselves."

The Prime Minister said a good lesson from the hijrah was the nurturing of Muslim brotherhood between the Muhajirin and Ansar, forming a strong Muslim community which protected itself from its enemies.

Dr Mahathir said Muslim unity was one lesson in Islam that could provide much strength to the ummah.

When the Arab jahiliah (pre-Islamic), who were divided into many groups and always fighting among themselves, accepted Islam, they emerged as an ummah that not only established an empire but also effectively propagated Islam.

"However, when they forgot about Muslim unity and fought among themselves again, their empire was destroyed and the Muslim countries that came about were small, weak and easily suppressed by their enemies."

Muslims now are more inclined to blame their disunity on the designs and plots by the enemies of Islam, whereas they themselves do not bother to reject the instigations of their enemies.

"The truth is that the Muslims choose to remain enemies of one another and even sided with the enemies of Islam in order to create enmity with other Muslims.

"This explains why most of the victims of Muslim violence are Muslims themselves.

"What is very sad is that whenever Muslims assert that they are fighting for Islam, other Muslims become their victims.

"And wherever they fight for Islam, they cause Muslims to be disunited

and weak," the Prime Minister said.

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