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#### Department's openness earns praise

JITRA, Fri. - The Kedah Health and Medical Services Department today earned praise from Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for their openness in the case of a housewife who was recently given HIV-contaminated blood.

"I am glad that they were open in admitting their mistake," the Prime Minister said.

He said he was, however, disappointed with the way the media had publicised the matter.

"I don't think it was fair to the person who had been given this blood as she may be ostricised by people who may regard her as being infectious."

Addressing Barisan Nasional members at the Dewan Jitra here, he also rapped certain politicians for taking the opportunity to influence the 47-year-old housewife to take a RM100 million suit against the Government.

Dr Mahathir also advised those in high risk groups to get tested for HIV before donating blood.

He also advised those visiting Thailand not to be involved in activities which could expose them to diseases.

"I am saddened that many Malaysians visit Haadyai simply to have fun."

On another development, Dr Mahathir said the curriculum for Islamic studies in schools and institutions of higher learning needed to be restructured as it was not effective in moulding the young to become good Muslims.

He said the present curriculum which did not stress fardhu kifayah (compulsory for the community), but only fardhu ain (compulsory for individuals) had failed to inculcate good values in children.

He said there was a need for Muslim professionals in various fields including defence, before it could be considered to have fulfilled the fardhu kifayah.

"If we do not have these people and the Muslims are weak and oppressed, the entire community will sin," he said.

He had been asked about his recent directive to the Islamic Development Department (Jakim), the Education Ministry and State Governments to review Islamic studies for schools and institutions of higher learning during a meeting with Menteris Besar and Chief Ministers.

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