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Dr M: Beware those who sow hatred

PUTRAJAYA, Sat. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad advised Puspanita members today to be wary of the opinions of certain quarters who misinterpreted religion to instil hatred against others, especially the Government and its leaders.

The Prime Minister said such quarters, through their allegations, would try to instil hatred to the point that people accepted them and allowed wrong and sinful actions.

"Recently, there had been an incident involving torture and murder by a group that wanted to 'practise' Islam.

"By firing up the feelings of members of the group through various wrong interpretations of Islam, the group was able to drag them into doing things forbidden by Islam."

He said this in his speech when opening the 18th Puspanita annual general meeting at the Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Putrajaya 1 here.

Dr Mahathir said feelings of hatred towards others would make people lose their reasoning and pride without cause.

The Prime Minister cautioned Puspanita members against talks by religious lecturers who incited anger and hatred against the Government and the organisation should not give such people a chance to do so.

"Insyah-Allah (God willing), with religious knowledge and noble values, Puspanita can contribute to national development and to the development of its members," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the progress made by the country due to the people's love for peace and dislike for chaos, had ensured a high quality of life.

If chaos reigned, the Government's money, along with that of the private sector and individuals, would have to be spent to ensure peace and security.

"All this will channel our spending from having a peaceful life to protecting ourselves.

"All our living costs will go up as everyone would need to spend part of their income for security resulting in prices escalating."

Present were Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, his wife and Puspanita president Puan Sri Teh Zahariah Jahidin, and about 1,000 Puspanita members from all over the country.

Teh Zahariah said Puspanita would continue with activities that supported the policies of the Government and that each year, programmes were carried out to ensure members were aware of current and national matters.

"As an organisation that has almost 50,000 members, we must keep up with developments and progress made by Malaysian women in particular and women around the world in general.

"We will use their achievements as a platform draw up and plan programmes and activities that can benefit our members and ultimately our country," she said.

Teh Zahariah also stressed the need for members to keep up with changes taking place in the fields of electronic commerce and the knowledge economy.

"Keeping abreast of these changes is vital to our continued progress," she said.

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