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Mahathir-Rulers

MALAY RULERS CAN PLAY A ROLE IN UNITING MUSLIMS

JITRA, March 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad believes that the Malay rulers can play a role in uniting Muslims through religious councils.

The rulers had a role to play in this matter although currently their roles were mainly towards religious matters, Dr Mahathir told reporters at his Aidiladha open house at Dewan Jitra, here, today.

He was asked whether the Malay rulers could play a role in uniting Muslims of different political beliefs in the country.

The prime minister, in his Aidiladha message, had called on Muslims to overcome political differences and strengthen their solidarity in the spirit of the current haj season.

He said he believed that the Malay rulers did not talk about politics for fear that their words might be misinterpreted by others.

"Already there are some politicians who claim that if a ruler stands in the election, the ruler will be beaten," Dr Mahathir said.

He said the solidarity of Muslims in the country continued to be jeopardised even after the general election.

The opposition had continued with their ceramah, which poisoned the people's minds, and their misuse of mosques, he said.

"In Terengganu, there are cases of mosques being cleansed because they had been used by Umno members," he said.

Answering another question, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional government did not remove officers who were against the government, unlike the PAS governments in Kelantan and Terengganu.

"There are some government officers, including with the rank of ministry secretary-general who confessed to me that they support the opposition but we don't remove them," he said.

Present were Dr Mahathir's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain and Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng.

-- BERNAMA

JM JK