

21/09/2000

PM: Show caring side of Islam

Abdul Razak Ahmad

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight advised Muslims in the country to prove to non-Muslims that Islam is not an isolationist religion, but one which takes into account the well-being of others.

"We want Muslims to show that they are sensitive to problems faced by non-Muslims and are caring," the Prime Minister said at a charity dinner organised by the Islamic Specialist Doctors Association of Malaysia (Isdam).

Isdam, launched by Dr Mahathir in October last year, is a body which utilises local Islamic medical specialists in an effort to resolve some of the many ethical dilemmas brought about by new discoveries in the medical field.

Its main objective is to establish dialysis treatment centres for poor patients.

The dinner was to collect money for its Tabung Ihsan Sang Wira - a fund to help, among others, needy heart and kidney patients.

Dr Mahathir said he was happy with Isdam's efforts and was convinced that its members would not isolate themselves from their non-Muslim counterparts.

"This (Isdam's activities) proves to all that Islam does not reject charity, even to non-Muslims."

He said doctors must realise that they had a responsibility to help all patients, regardless of race or religion.

Dr Mahathir said although Malaysia was a multi-racial and multi-religious country which could see friction among the various groups of people within it, the charity work done by organisations such as Isdam would help to foster closer relations in society and contribute to keeping the peace.

"This would not only prove that Islam is a religion which takes into account the problems in society but also that it does not separate non-Muslims."

Also present were Isdam patron Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Dr Mohd Khir Toyo and Isdam president Dr M.A. Sidek Nontak.

Dr Mahathir received mock cheques on behalf of Isdam from several parties, including a RM10,000 donation from the Selangor Government.

(END)