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Mahathir-Religion

RELIGIOUS COURSES AT GOVT DEPTS TO INCULCATE ISLAMIC VALUES

PUTRAJAYA, July 22 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the religious courses to be conducted at the government departments will prioritise the inculcation of Islamic values and will not contain political elements like the current ones.

The prime minister said the Islamic values included trust, sincerity, honouring promises, responsibility and honesty.

"We will have courses that are more organised and give priority to inculcating Islam, not be about what is religion or fardhu ain (personal religious obligations)...that can be learnt elsewhere," he told reporters after opening the Puspanita annual general meeting, here.

Dr Mahathir said the government was doing this to prevent the religious talks organised by civil servants from being used to inculcate hatred for the government.

He said there were ceramah held at the government departments which criticised the government although they were originally meant to teach religion.

He said the talks, which were more like opposition campaigns, had caused many government officers holding certain posts to join other parties, making it difficult for the government to discharge its responsibilities.

"They are not professional, their work is influenced by their membership in opposition parties. That's why we stopped the lectures at government offices," he said.

Weekly Islamic study classes would be held in their place, he said.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said lectures that stirred up anger and hatred for the government were very dangerous and Puspanita should not tolerate religious speakers who deliver such lectures.

Puspanita members must be wary of the views advocated by certain people who liked to misinterpret religion to spread hatred for others, especially the government and leaders, Dr Mahathir said.

Present were his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali and about 1,000 Puspanita members from all over the country.

-- BERNAMA

AR AZZ JK