

# Mahathir: Muslims could have learnt much from China

STAR 29 JUL 2001

KUALA LUMPUR: Muslims would be more advanced today if they had obeyed Prophet Muhammad's injunction to seek knowledge even in China, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said Westerners had become more advanced today because they had gone to China earlier to acquire knowledge and the sciences developed by the Chinese.

"The Chinese (then) had already learnt to make explosives although at that time they used it not to destroy people, but instead to make as much noise as possible in order to chase away evil spirits.

"This knowledge and other subjects developed by the Chinese people were worthy of being studied and learned," he said when opening the "Six Centuries of Islamic Art In China" exhibition here.

The show featured art objects and cultural artefacts of Chinese Muslims from the 14th to the 20th Century AD, which aimed to provide an insight of the coming of the Islamic religion to China and its influence on Chinese culture.

Dr Mahathir later joined in writing calligraphy text with China's Lanzhou Islamic College calligraphy lecturer Mohamad Yusuf Chen Kun.