

PBDS welcomes clarification on status

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PETALING JAYA: The Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) yesterday welcomed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad recent clarification on the status of Malaysia as an Islamic country when opening the Gerakan assembly.

Its president Datuk Amar Leo Moggie said it was clear that Malaysia was an Islamic country that met all the criteria as expected in Islam.

"Malaysia meets all the requirements, not only in the administration and management of the country but also in ensuring that the rights of Muslims and the sanctity of the religion are protected," he said in a press statement.

He said this fact was also recognised by the global community that has witnessed Malaysia's progress based on Islamic principles, besides practising an intrinsic trait of tolerance for other faiths and respect for the multi-racial and multi-religious communities that make up the country.

In Kuala Lumpur, *Bernama* quoted Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein as saying that the PAS' challenge to the Prime Minister to declare in Parliament that Malaysia is an Islamic state need not be entertained.

"There are other matters that can be discussed in Parliament rather than raising empty rhetorical issues," he said at a media conference after receiving contributions from four non-governmental organisations for the Afghan Refugees Charity Fund sponsored by the movement here yesterday.

The amount collected so far is RM252,000.

Contributors to the fund yesterday were Sekretariat Melayu Muda (RM15,000), Gerakan Belia 4B Bentong (RM15,000), Angkatan Muda Dakwah (RM10,000) and Warga Muda Melayu Malaysia (RM10,000).