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Don't cause suffering, group appeals

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The National Evangelical Christian Fellowship today advised the United States to ensure that retaliation against the attacks on the country should avoid causing suffering to innocent people.

Its secretary-general, Rev Wong Kim Kong, said it should not arouse religious or ethnic sentiments and animosity.

"The Christian community's fervent prayer is that any response to the recent attacks in the United States should be redemptive in nature and not destructive."

Wong, in supporting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's stand on the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, said what had happened had an effect on Malaysia's multi-cultural and multi-religious environment.

"What has happened in the United States should give us a new urgency and perspective in evaluating the radical religious movements which sow seeds of religious militancy in the country," he said.

He said everyone had to share the responsibility of strengthening understanding between Muslims and Christians.

"Terrorism should not be equated with religious conflict, though it may have radical religious interest. Any form of extremism or terrorism should not be coloured with ethnicity and religion."

Wong said that the global struggle against terrorism was not a conflict with Islam.

"The terrorist attacks were premeditated murdering and torturing of human life. They bring horrendous damage to property and suffering to society."

Wong said while there were misperceptions in the West about Islam, it was the same with many Muslims equating Christianity with Western civilisation.

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