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Mahathir-Ikim

RADIO IKIM CAN CORRECT MISCONCEPTION ON ISLAM, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad believes that Radio Ikim.fm can enhance the role of the Malaysian Institute of Islamic Understanding (Ikim) in correcting the misconception of the non-Muslims on Islamic teachings.

The prime minister said today he believed that with the radio, all messages on Islamic teachings would be conveyed more extensively to the people.

He said Ikim was set up specifically to clear all manner of confusion among the non-Muslims regarding Islamic teachings and to correct misunderstandings on the teachings among the Muslims themselves.

"I believe that if this radio broadcast is conducted smartly without any other interest except to convey information on the true teachings of Islam, this radio will benefit all the people in the country," he said when launching Radio Ikim.fm at Ikim here.

He said there were now many negative notions on Islam spread by certain parties, especially at the international level, including those linking Islam with criminal acts and violence.

Dr Mahathir said, for example, that if a building was bombed as had happened in the United States, the Muslims would be the first to be accused of the offence even if it was done by others.

However, he said, the involvement of Muslims in crimes and violence like kidnappings had to a certain extent influenced the other communities in their perception of Muslims.

Commenting on Ikim's role, Dr Mahathir said the institute had played its role well in providing information for the non-Muslims in the country and in getting recognition from the international community through the seminars that it organised.

On misconceptions among the Muslims, Mahathir said it was a challenge that had to be met because the Muslims had differing interpretations of the Islamic laws.

"It is clear that there are Muslims who concentrate only on certain devotions whereas Islam is a way of life with various activities that must be given attention," the prime minister said.

Besides that, he said, there were Muslims in the country who practised teachings that deviated from Islam and this could affect the faith of the Muslims in Malaysia if not checked.

He said that in the Quran there were two types of verses, namely the verses that were specific and could not be misinterpreted and verses that were open to various forms of interpretation.

The same applied to the hadis, he said, adding that there were authentic hadis and hadis that were weak and not authenticated by the ulama.

As such, Dr Mahathir said, efforts must be stepped up to explain to the Muslims the true interpretation of particular Quranic verses as well as hadis that were authentic and those that were not.

Earlier, Ikim chairman Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid said Radio IKIM.fm, which obtained its broadcasting licence effective July 1 this year, would present "A world view of Islam" by pooling information with entertainment value to benefit listeners.

He said the information would cover the economy, management, business, finance, law, syariah, political science, social science, medicine, health

and various communication fields with the target on Muslims and non-Muslims, especially converts.

The programmes would be in Malay, English and Arabic and were aimed at inspiring listeners to interact intellectually with the announcers and at opening up their minds to be more tolerant in discussing contemporary issues.

He said the station, the first fully digital Islamic-based radio station, received an allocation of RM12.8 million from the government and its broadcast could be received as far as Batam island, Indonesia.

The 24-hour service can be tuned in at 91.5 Mhz for the Klang Valley, Perak and Negeri Sembilan (102.7 Mhz), Kedah, Penang and Perlis (89.0 Mhz), Melaka (89.5 Mhz), Johor Baharu (107.9 Mhz), Kota Baharu (89.8 Mhz), Kuantan (89.6 Mhz), Kuala Terengganu (100.2 Mhz), Kuching (98.8 Mhz) and Kota Kinabalu (93.9 Mhz).

-- BERNAMA

AKT AHH JK