



PM reminds Muslims on knowledge, skills

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DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reminded Muslims of the importance of knowledge and skills, saying the acquisition of knowledge that contributes to the well-being of the ummah is a primary obligation.

The Prime Minister said the quest for knowledge was the first step towards the fulfilment of the Muslim injunction to be charitable, and to endow the wealth earned for the well-being of the Muslims and their need for institutions and facilities to perform their ritual and non-ritual obligations as Muslims.

"With skills we can enrich ourselves and enrich our society. We can produce and invent things, trade and manu-

facture," he said in his keynote address at the conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir reminded Muslims that they were craftsmen and thinkers but for a long time they had stopped improving their production or their thinking.

They kept on labouriously producing things by hand one by one, which could supply the needs of the six billion plus people in the world, he said.

He noted that because Muslims did not know how to mass produce goods to meet the demand of a mass market, they became poor and consequently were not able to give alms and to endow towards the Muslim community.

He said if few Muslims could practise charity and they were often so oppressed and harassed by their enemies that they could not even perform the solat, it was because the Muslims were poor in knowledge and skills, were unable to enrich their countries and strengthen them against aggression by their enemies.

"It is shameful and unIslamic that all we Muslims can do when the Israelis massacred Palestinians in Jenin and elsewhere is to appeal to others for pity and help," he said, noting it was clear that Muslims had not been doing anything to change their own helplessness.