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Mahathir-Islam

MALAYSIA IS INDEED AN ISLAMIC COUNTRY- DR M

SHAH ALAM, Sept 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is recognised as an Islamic state by both Islamic and non-Islamic countries in the world, the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, reiterated today.

This recognition was sufficient for it to be accepted as an Islamic nation, he said when opening a seminar on "Understanding Malaysia as an Islamic State" here.

The majority of Muslims in Malaysia and in the whole world recognised Malaysia as an Islamic state, he said.

There was no need for anything else to prove that Malaysia was an Islamic state.

The Government could come up with clear proof that all the teachings of Islam that could be implemented by the government in Malaysia had already been implemented, he said.

"Islamic laws or Syariah laws are enforced in Malaysia taking into account that there are also peoples of other religions in this country, as justice is the main factor in Islamic law," Dr Mahathir said.

He said Islam provided flexibility when implementing Syariah Law in line with prevailing situations and even in countries where Muslims were in the minority and were not in power, Syariah Law was enforced only to the extent that was possible and this did not bring any disaster to them.

He said in countries where 100 per cent of the population was Muslim then Syariah Law could be fully implemented there.

Dr Mahathir said Muslims and Islamic teachings were protected by the government of Malaysia while deviationist teachings were checked.

He said loyal followers of the Sunnah Waljamaah could not reject the public view and follow the views of the minority whose view differed from that of the majority.

Disunity among Muslims was due to a small group of opponents such as the Khawarij faction of the past, which rejected the views of the majority.

"Those who reject the views of the majority of Muslims in this country, who wish to divide Muslims and create chaos have no right to question whether Malaysia was Islamic or otherwise," Dr Mahathir said.

Dr Mahathir said this minority group had no mandate whatsoever to determine whether this country was Islamic or not.

He said the important thing was the majority of devout Muslims in this country and in other places recognised Malaysia as an Islamic state.

"Recognition from people with vested interests particularly those who ridicule Islamic teachings such as by claiming Tuhan is the biggest gangster is not important," he said.

He said irrespective of whether this group of people recognised or not the fact was Malaysia was an Islamic state, administered by Muslims in line with all of Allah's commands.

At a question and answer session later, Dr Mahathir was asked about the Reed Commission which was set up in 1956 to frame the constitution for the Federation of Malaya.

The Prime Minister said although the Reed Commission did not say that Malaya was an Islamic country but the fact now was that the world recognised Malaysia as an Islamic nation.

The Islamic world always referred to Malaysia as a model Islamic state, he added.

-- BERNAMA

RIZ RIZ AAM