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PM: Reject Pas' deviationist teachings

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NILAI, Thurs. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on the Muslim society to reject attempts by Pas to deviate them from the true teachings of Islam.

Dr Mahathir said political alliance was the people's right, but urged them to reject deviationist teachings and views which would be detrimental to the community.

"The society must reject (such attempts) ...if they want to support Pas it is alright, but they must reject anything that is not consistent with the teachings of Islam," he said.

Speaking at a Press conference after performing the ground-breaking ceremony for the Islamic University College of Malaysia near here, he said Pas had, in fact, adopted the outlawed Al-Arqam movement's strategies to influence its supporters and sympathisers.

Dr Mahathir said that although Pas' teachings differed from that of the deviationist movement, the main aim of the opposition party was to get its followers to be obsessed with it and its leaders.

The Prime Minister said that such negative strategies had proven to be effective, as witnessed by Malaysians recently.

He said Pas members blindly accepted the party and its leaders although a fellow member exposed himself during the Pendang and Anak Bukit by-elections in Kedah recently.

"If Muslims see a person doing such a thing he will be rejected, but Pas members accept people who expose themselves while preaching to the people to wear tudung," Dr Mahathir said.

Describing the situation as serious, he said such deviant acts could not be condoned because they would eventually confuse and ruin the Muslim society.

"Such a teaching is widespread, showing that a lot of Muslims are confused about their religion and its teachings.

"It is not easy to lead them to the right path once they are obsessed with something ...similar to the Al-Arqam followers, some of whom are still obsessed with their leader.

"Such teachings and beliefs cannot be tolerated at all," he added. Dr Mahathir said that among the ill-attempts was a campaign designed to confuse Muslims pertaining to their perception of Islam and God.

"All this while we pray to a God who is ever loving and all forgiving, but now we are told that the God we pray to is a gangster and a cheat. This is blasphemy," he said.

Expressing hope that such tendencies and ill-acts would not make their way into the Islamic College University of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir said students should be taught the true Islamic teachings and not exposed to deviated political lectures which could destroy their faith.

"Don't sabotage our pure effort by bringing in elements to divert our students. Islam advocates what's true and good. Islam doesn't ask us to do bad things," he said.

Earlier in his 45 minute speech at the function, Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, said the university college was another effort by the Government to provide knowledge on Islam to students, irrespective of their religions.

He told the thousand-odd guests and students that it was an extension of the Government's noble aim to provide Islamic understanding to the people,

right from elementary up to university level.

He said Muslims were oppressed today because the majority of them were unable to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills to defend their countries.

"We hope this college university will enhance students' knowledge in science, technology and engineering as apart from an in-depth understanding of the religion, such knowledge is vital for our survival," he added.

The Islamic College University of Malaysia is the 12th public university in the country. It was set up with the objective to generate and integrate Islamic education in the mainstream of the national education system.