

05 OCT 2002

Mahathir-Insult

ONLY THE IGNORANT CALL THE PROPHET A TERRORIST, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that those who call Prophet Muhammad a terrorist do not understand Islam.

"They don't understand anything, they don't understand Islam," he told reporters after opening the Gerakan general assembly at its headquarters, here.

He was asked to comment on reports that a renowned priest in the United States, Jerry Falwell, in an interview in CBS' "60 Minutes" programme had called Prophet Muhammad a terrorist. The programme is scheduled to be aired on Sunday.

Dr Mahathir said the priest had no right to make such a statement.

Asked whether such a statement from a reverend is an indication that the Christian community is ignorant of Islam, Dr Mahathir said the only ignorant person was the one who made statement.

"I'm not going to accuse all Christians, only one person made such statement," he said.

He said Muslims should not take the matter too seriously.

In MELAKA, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak strongly protested the move by CBS to allow a statement which insulted Prophet Muhammad.

"We strongly protest and deeply regret the attempt to insult Prophet Muhammad and Islam through such acts," he told reporters after the Briefing on Melaka Voter Registration, here today.

Najib, who is also Defence Minister, said any acts after the Sept 11 incident should not lead to conflicts between the Muslims and followers of other religions.

He said the reaction of some groups in the West towards Islam was not rational as they considered the religion as an enemy of those who were non-Muslims.

"Thus, we hope incidents such as this would not be prolonged by the parties concerned. We should protest strongly any act that insulted or ridiculed Islam.

"We should differentiate the majority of Islam who generally love peace. They don't like violence, on the contrary, only a minority (resort to violence)," he said.

Meanwhile, the Convention on the Malay World and Islamic World (DMDI) which concluded here, today passed a special resolution condemning the CBS TV station and Falwell.

The special resolution, which was tabled at the end of the convention, was accepted unanimously by the approximately 300 participants representing various countries such as South Africa, Indonesia, China, Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Madagascar.

-- BERNAMA

NHM ZS NO JK AO