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Mahathir-Islam

EXTEND PROPAGATION OF ISLAM AMONG NON-MUSLIMS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight that Muslims should explain about Islam to the non-Muslims so that they will better understand the religion.

The prime minister said that this was very important now following the bad picture given of Islam.

"Even if it's not for (the non-Muslims) to accept or embrace Islam, it's very important to explain what Islam is so as to dispel their doubts and prejudice against the religion," he said at a dinner hosted by the Malaysian Islamic Welfare Organisation (Perkim), here.

He said that explaining about Islam now was very important because the public did not understand the religion and had in fact accepted the portrayal of Islam as a violent religion.

He said that this was due to the fact that Muslim missionaries were not serious about propagating Islam.

Dr Mahathir said the non-Muslims had been given the picture by Islam's enemies that Prophet Muhammad was the leader of terrorists and that Islam only taught its followers to become terrorists.

He said Islam, which had existed for 1,400 years, was actually a peaceful religion and the only one based on the Quran and the true hadis.

Unfortunately, after Prophet Muhammad's death, various interpretations of the religion had caused disunity among its followers and created sects with differing interpretations, resulting in animosity among them, he said.

As a result, the Muslims had become weak and unable to defend themselves because they only gave emphasis to religious knowledge and not to other important branches of knowledge.

"What's happened now is that the Muslims are weak knowledge-wise, especially in defending themselves, and unable to progress," he said.

He said Muslims, who used to be experts in mathematics and science and other fields, now had to depend on others and were under pressure and easily defeated.

Referring of the United States-led invasion of Iraq, he said this was proof that the Muslims were weak although they were blessed with natural resources, such as oil, to defend themselves.

Dr Mahathir said that the Muslims often submitted themselves to fate without seriously working to rectify the situation and change their fate, as was required by Islam.

He said that instead of treating the non-Muslims as their enemies, the Muslims should work to enhance their own capabilities.

"Don't blame others, blame ourselves for being weak," he said.

He also expressed the hope that Perkim would continue to grow and carry out missionary work based on the true teachings of Islam.

At the dinner, Dr Mahathir, who is also Perkim's patron, received RM1.5 million from corporate bodies for the Perkim Fund.

-- BERNAMA

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