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Mahathir-PAS

MISINTERPRETATION OF ISLAM BY PAS GETTING WORSE, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the misinterpretations of the teachings of Islam by PAS have confused and split Muslims in the country at a time when the Muslims should unite to save themselves.

The prime minister said that in their attempt to gain support, PAS had deliberately misinterpreted Islam, and over time, their interpretations had become more far-fetched and extreme.

"From accusing Umno members as being infidels, not Muslim, they have reached the stage of declaring that God uses obscenities like their own party leader does and that God is a thug or gangster," he said in his last policy speech as Umno president at the opening of the 54th Umno general assembly, here.

Dr Mahathir said that the best way to overcome this problem was to equip the people, especially the young generation, with the right Islamic teachings so that they could ward off the wrong teachings.

Unfortunately, he said, these wrong teachings were implanted while the children were still small, in the kindergartens and the people's religious schools (SAR) and sometimes by religious teachers in national schools.

"We have seen that when this generation matures, they blindly believe this wrong interpretation of Islam. They do not know how to thank people and be grateful, love to falsely accuse other Muslims and to hear the 'fitnah' by certain people and they make enemies of other Muslims.

"They have now reached the stage of trying to overthrow the elected government by force of arms, to terrosise, to rob and to kill people," he said.

Because of this, the government had to take action to stop the spread of these wrong teachings in the schools and other institutions.

Dr Mahathir said the government gave aid to the people's religious schools because parents liked to send their children to these schools, believing that they would become more knowledgeable about religion.

But because the true religion was not taught at these schools the government could no longer give them aid, he said.

"The government and Muslim leaders of the government would be committing a sin if we give support for anything that is against the teachings of Islam. We did not close the schools. We merely do not give aid.

"Those who continue to give aid will bear the sins because these are not religious schools but indoctrination centres for PAS," he said.

He said the government would oversee all deviations from the teachings of Islam and would provide facilities to study the proper teachings of Islam in the national schools.

This was to ensure that the new generation could reject not only the wrong teachings but could also distinguish between good and bad and right and wrong, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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