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'Misinterpretation of Islam a threat'

Hamidah Atan

SEREMBAN, Mon. - The wrong interpretation of Islamic teachings is one of the biggest threats to the country's political and economic stability.

Islamic adviser to the Prime Minister Tan Sri Dr Abdul Hamid Othman said the Government was doing its best to promote Islam as the pillar underpinning the development of civilisation in all aspects.

"However, some quarters say that what is being done to develop the country is unIslamic.

"This is the biggest threat from within, which the Government is trying to neutralise by holding seminars and workshops to foster a better understanding of Islam," he said after opening a one-day seminar for mosque officials and committee members titled Kefahaman Takaful Malaysia at the Paroi Islamic Centre, near here.

Hamid said that although the Government had been able to crack down cases of deviationist teachings, the misinterpretation of Islamic teachings posed a different sort of problem, and needed to be dealt with accordingly.

"These quarters must go back to the fundamentals in order to understand better the basic teachings of Islam," he said.

Government agencies and departments had been asked to hold programmes that could help instil in their staff a better understanding of Islam.

Hamid also said Muslims became involved in corruption because they lacked a true understanding of the religion. "The Government is enhancing the delivery system to fight the menace," he added.

Hamid said the Government would not act against Pas leaders who had said that Allah was a gangster and uttered profanities.

"They (Pas leaders) still do this knowing well that their actions go against the teachings of Islam because they want to test their followers and the patience of Umno leaders.

"When the followers who are their 'yes' men agree with what they say without objecting, the leaders continue to do other things that are against the teachings of Islam," Hamid said.

Of the recent caricature in the Pas newsletter Harakah that depicted Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad with a nose shaped like a pig's snout, Hamid said it was a clear indication that Pas leaders had gone against the teachings of Islam.

"Our PM does not want to act against these people because he knows that the society at large knows what Pas is up to.

"Society is clever enough to differentiate between the good and bad, the truth and wrong," he said.

Pas' political ploys would not perturb the Government, he added.