

Dr M says Islam emphasises justice
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As the debates over whether Malaysia is an Islamic state or not and the jurisdiction of the civil and syariah courts rage, former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has come out with his reminder that Islam emphasises justice.

Mahathir in his latest blog posting titled Islamic state says there are 43 verses in the Al Quran that emphasise upon Muslims “to judge with justice”.

He said justice must be done not only to Muslims but to non-Muslims as well.

Mahathir, who was the country's longest-serving prime minister, also emphasised that applying hudud to Muslims and not to non-Muslims would be injustice.

“In the interests of upholding Islamic justice for all, we have not implemented hudud. Islam is not so rigid that injustice should be ignored in carrying out what is enjoined in Islam... If we do not apply hudud, it is not because we reject it but because we are enjoined to uphold justice.

“To cut off the hands of Muslims for stealing while non-Muslim thieves would only get two months' jail cannot be regarded as just. The sentence must be the same for both,” Mahathir emphasised.

In not applying the Islamic penal system in the country, he said, Malaysia was truly adhering to the teachings of Islam and hence, his earlier claim that the country is Islamic is valid.

If the hands of non-Muslims are cut off in order to be just, Malaysia may, on the other hand, bring chaos and havoc to the country.

'Allah does not like people who cause chaos'

“Allah does not like people who cause chaos and havoc in society,” he said.

To lend credence to Malaysia being an Islamic country, Mahathir said, although this may not be stated so in the Federal Constitution or in its name, it is recognised by its beliefs and practises that Malaysia is Islamic.

He said Malaysia never declared itself to be secular, either in its constitution or anywhere else.

“That is because we respect all religions and their believers. Secular states ban religions. We saw this in communist countries before.

“But today, everyone practices religious freedom and this is compatible with Islam,” Mahathir said.

The former prime minister then went on to explain that when he claimed Malaysia to be an Islamic country, he was comparing it with other Islamic countries whose application of Islamic laws and injunctions appear less rigid.

Islam allows for some leeway or differences of interpretation so that the religion could be practised under different circumstances and in different parts of the world, Mahathir said.

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