

Preachers must avoid extremist views: Mahathir
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Local missionaries must be free from extremist influence which tarnishes the image of Islam in discharging their responsibilities, said Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

The former prime minister said if there were missionaries who were influenced by the extreme practices of certain Islamic countries and try to spread such practices in this country, it would pose problems.

"They should preach smartly to suit the local situation," he said when opening the 49th annual general meeting of the Malaysian Muslim Welfare Organisation (Perkim) in Kangar.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Perkim president, said extremist missionary activities not only tarnished the image of the Islamic religion but would also result in the Muslims being looked upon with contempt and create splits within the Muslims.

Worse still, Dr Mahathir said there were those who felt that violence must be used to topple governments on grounds that they did not follow the wishes of Islam, without thinking that violence was a form of cruelty.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir was returned unopposed for the post of Perkim president which he held since 2006.

Perkim honorary secretary-general Abdul Hamid Othman announced the result at the general meeting held at a hotel in Kangar.

Four people elected as Perkim vice-presidents were former Perlis menteri besar Shahidan Kassim, Ariffin Suhaimi, Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman and Mustapha Ma.

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