

Don't relegate religion to backyard of the soul, says Mahathir

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ASTANA (Khazakhstan): Religion cannot and must not be relegated to the backyard of the human soul, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here yesterday.

It has an important place in the lives of individuals, families, society, nations and, eventually, the world, "that is, if we are eager to create a new world order of freedom, justice, love and peace".

The former premier said this when addressing the Second Congress of Religious Leaders of Traditional Religions here.

He said religion is today unfortunately relegated to the backyard of the soul and this is why religion which, in fact, must have the essence of love

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and brotherhood in everybody's life and society, seems to have become the reason for strife and tension.

"This is a very timely congress since the world is now in turmoil and anxiety," he said.

Mahathir said in a large way the world still remains primitive because it still thinks that killing people is a way to solve problems between peoples, all in the name of God.

"Time has come for us to reject the idea that war can help resolve the problems of disagreement between peoples," he said.

He also expressed the conviction that "mutual relations between people may be resolved through negotiations. Only this way can we stop the killings that continue today".