

Muslims must strive to restore glory of Islam, says Pak Lah

KANGAR: Datuk Seri Abdullah: Ahmad Badawi said Muslims must have a plan of action to restore the glory of Islam.

The Prime Minister said the time to bask in the past glory of Islam was over.

"Efforts to bring progress and rebuild the Islamic civilisation are obligations of Muslims," he said when opening the 47th National Quranic Reciters Assembly at Dataran Datuk Sheikh Ahmad here last night.

Abdullah said Muslims must strive to develop the *ummah* and country, because it was part of worship.

He said the Government had taken a balanced and comprehensive approach to development without neglecting certain aspects of Islam.

"In my opinion, the time to talk about the greatness of Islam during its historic period is over.

"We must have action plans which can seriously and systematically aim to bring back the religion's glory in the 21st century," he said.

The Prime Minister said it was unfortunate that certain Muslims had misinterpreted the beautiful and proper teachings of Islam.

"Today, Muslims have been labelled by the western world as terrorists and creators of mayhem. And, due to this, they view the religion as a complicated, failed, aggressive and violent faith," he said.

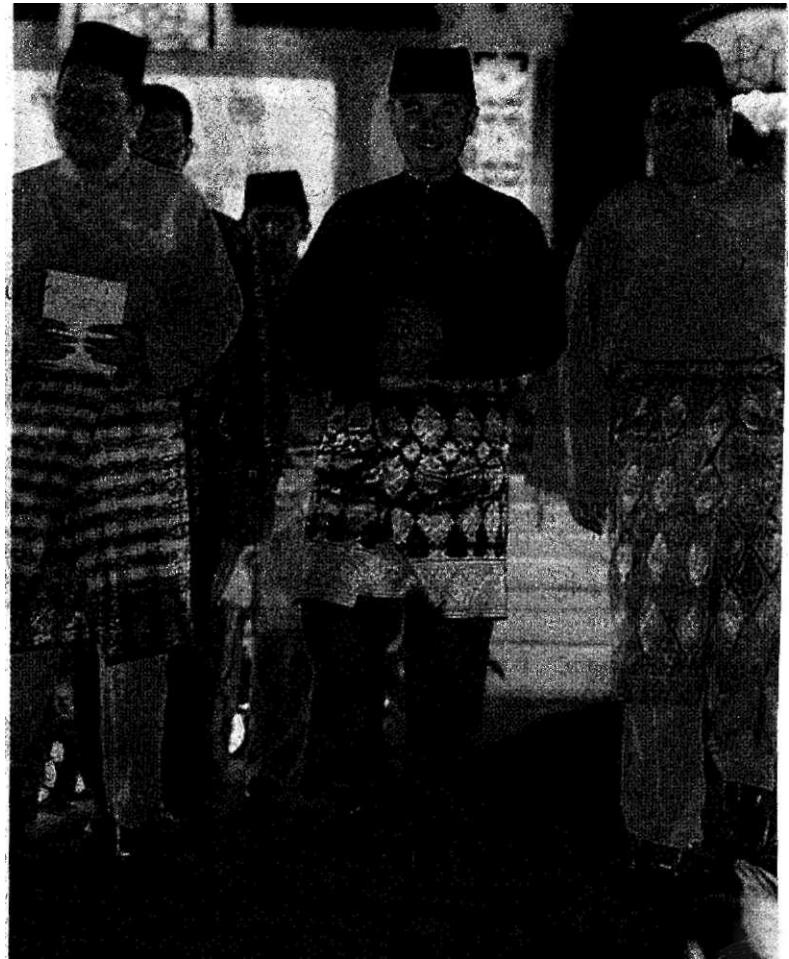
He added that efforts to develop a respectable lifestyle on earth by seeking out success and building an Islamic civilisation at the same time was actually part of the requirements in Islam.

"As a Muslim, I am glad that Britain's first Islamic banking institution will be operating in Birmingham soon. Muslims there have achieved success which we can be proud."

In this regard, Abdullah said he had directed Bank Negara to work with Maybank and Bank of Commerce to open their Islamic banking services in London soon.

This will enable both Muslims and non-Muslims in Britain to enjoy, the services and benefits covered under the Islamic banking principles, he added.

He said Muslims must now initiate steps to rediscover its past glory to ensure that they were on par with the others.



GRAND OPENING: Abdullah, accompanied by Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim (left) and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Abdullah Md Zin, arriving at the National Quranic Reciters Assembly in Kangar last night.