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KOTA BAHARU, MARCH 27 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THERE ARE CERTAIN QUARTERS WHO CLAIM THAT DEATH OF MUSLIMS IN THE COURSE OF FIGHTING ONE ANOTHER IS GOOD IN ISLAM.

+THEY HAVE STRAYED SO FAR FROM THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM THAT THEY HAVE TO RECOURSE TO DEATH TO REKINDLE THEIR SPIRIT,+ HE TOLD A 10,000-STRONG CROWD WHICH TURNED UP TO GREET HIM ON ARRIVAL AT THE ISMAIL PETRA AIRPORT HERE FOR A TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT OF KELANTAN.

+THEY OFFER PRAYERS FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS DIED IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, AS IF HE IS NO LONGER A HUMAN BEING BUT SOME KIND OF OBJECT TO BE WORSHIPPED TO ROUSE THEIR SPIRIT,+ HE SAID.

THIS WAS WRONG FROM THE ASPECT OF ISLAM, AND IT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF UMNO MEMBERS TO BRING SUCH PEOPLE BACK TO THE RIGHT PATH, TO THE QURAN AND TO ISLAM.

THEY SHOULD LEAVE BEHIND WHAT WAS UNISLAMIC AND RETURN TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY QURAN. -- MORE
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HE SAID THE PEOPLE WHO HAD DIED IN THE IRAN-IRAG WAR COULD NOT BE SAID TO HAVE DIED A HOLY DEATH BECAUSE THEY DID NOT FIGHT TO DEFEND ISLAM AGAINST THE ENEMY.

THE CONFLICT WHICH RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF ABOUT 800,000 PEOPLE COULD HAVE BEEN SETTLED THROUGH CONSULTATIONS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HE SAID UMNO DID NOT REJECT PAS BUT WAS READY TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS AND COOPERATE WITH THE PARTY IF THE PARTY REALLY UPHELD ISLAMIC TEACHINGS.

+PAS WAS NOT TOO LONG AGO ACCEPTED IN THE ALLIANCE AND THIS SHOWED THAT UMNO IS NOT GREEDY FOR POWER. HOWEVER THE PARTY WAS NOT SINCERE AND WITHDREW OF ITS OWN ACCORD,+ HE SAID

AS A CHAMPION OF ISLAM AND THE NATION, UMNO WOULD MAKE EFFORTS TO +OPEN THEIR EYES+ SO THAT THEY WOULD REALISE THE TRUE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM AND ABANDON THEIR LEADERS WHO MADE USE OF RELIGION TO WIN SUPPORT. -- MORE

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+UMNO MEMBERS MUST CONTINUE WITH THEIR STRUGGLE SO THAT THERE WILL NO LONGER BE PEOPLE WHO ARE CONFUSED OVER WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG IN ISLAM,+ THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

THOUGH UMNO HAD WIDE POWERS IT WOULD RULE THE COUNTRY FAIRLY IN LINE WITH ISLAMIC TEACHINGS.

+WE DO NOT WANT THE WORLD TO SAY THAT WHENEVER MUSLIMS RULE THEY RULE WITH TYRANNY,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

+WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT WE ARE MUSLIMS AND AS SUCH, BROTHERS, AND IF WE ARE BROTHERS WE MUST BEHAVE LIKE BROTHERS.+

EARLIER THE CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE UMNO LIAISON COMMITTEE DATUK HAJI MOHAMED YAACOB SAID UMNO MEMBERS IN KELANTAN HAD IDENTIFIED THE ENEMIES AND WOULD NOT CONCEDE ANY UMNO SEAT TO THEM. -- BERNAMA

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