

Barisan willing to take PAS back if . . .

KOTA BARU, Wed. — The Barisan Nasional is prepared to accept PAS back into its fold if the party accepts the true teachings of Islam and discards its "slanted ways."

The offer by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was couched in language which made it obvious that he was referring to PAS although he did not name the party.

The Prime Minister and Barisan chairman said his offer proved that the coalition, and Umno, of which he is also president, were not greedy when it came to the division of power.

"We are prepared to rule the country together provided they are sincere and willing to discuss mutual problems."

"We are not in the habit of making enemies out of them."

"We will welcome them if they co-operate fully with us," he told a gathering of 5,000 people at the Pengkalanchepa airport at the start of his two-day visit of Kelantan.

Dr Mahathir said Umno was also willing to open its arms to this opposition party to solve the current conflict between them.

However, he said that Umno's efforts to find peace were proving futile because the opposition party insisted on maintaining its "false teachings."

He also said that the party had started "worshipping the dead in an effort to arouse their spirits."

"Worshipping someone who is alive is one thing but worshipping someone who is already dead is certainly beyond comprehension."

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"This latest peculiar and un-Islamic trend proves that their Islamic sanity has gone haywire," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that when the opposition party first joined the Barisan, it discarded its "false and deviationist ways" but due to its "insincerity and lust for power," it was forced to leave the ruling coalition.

"Having left the Barisan and being out of our control and influence, the opposition party returned to its old ignorant ways," he said.

Dr Mahathir urged the members of the party to return to the fold of Islam.

He also urged them not to follow their leaders who were "greedy for power and did not hesitate to abuse religion to acquire support."

"We will not reject you because we are not out to create enemies of you. If you hold dearly to Islam, you will be looked after with us," he told the members of the opposition party.