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MAHATHIR-FATWA  
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KOTA BAHARU, MARCH 28 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY PAS LEADERS ISSUED FATWA (ISLAMIC RULINGS) BASED ON THEIR EMOTION AND NOT ON ISLAMIC TEACHINGS.

DESCRIBING SUCH A PRACTICE AS DEVIATING FROM THE RELIGION, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT FOR INSTANCE, THEIR ACTION IN TERMING IBRAHIM LIBYA AND HIS FOLLOWERS WHO WERE KILLED IN THE NOVEMBER MEMALI INCIDENT AS MARTYRS CLEARLY SHOWED TO WHAT EXTENT PAS LEADERS HAD DEVIATED FROM THE SACREDNESS OF ISLAM.

HE SAID PAS LEADERS CAME OUT WITH FATWA AFTER THEY WERE PRESSURED BY THOSE WHO HAD NO DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF THE RELIGION AND THIS, HE POINTED OUT, WAS WRONG AND AGAINST THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOVERNMENT ISSUED FATWA IN A RATIONAL MANNER, AFTER THE ULAMAKS HAD DELIBERATED AT LENGTH AND REFERRED TO THE QURAN AND OTHER HOLY BOOKS SANCTIONED BY ISLAM, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID WHEN LAUNCHING THE INTEGRATED PADI PROJECT IN MULONG-LATING NEAR HERE THIS EVENING.

ON THE QUESTION OF BRANDING OTHERS AS INFIDELS, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ITSELF, AFTER DETAILED STUDIES, OFFICIALLY CAME OUT WITH A FATWA THAT FOLLOWERS OF THE QADIANI SECT WERE NOT RECOGNISED AS MUSLIMS.

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A DECISION WAS REACHED THAT MEMBERS OF THE QADIANI SECT WERE NOT MUSLIMS AS THE SECT WAS NOT BASED ON THE TRUE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM, HE EXPLAINED.

THE PRIME MINISTER REGRETTED THAT PAS LEADERS BRANDED THE GOVERNMENT AND UMNO MEMBERS AS INFIDELS AT THEIR OWN WHIMS AND FANCIES.

HE SAID MUSLIMS IN THE COUNTRY HAD A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY OF BRINGING PAS MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS, WHO HAD BEEN MISLED BY THEIR LEADERS, TO THE TRUE PATH OF ISLAM.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PAS LEADERSHIP BRANDED THE GOVERNMENT AND UMNO MEMBERS AS INFIDELS SOLELY FOR POLITICAL INTERESTS AND TO MAKE GAINS IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

+BEFORE PAS EXISTED AND DURING THE BRITISH RULE, THE +KAFIR-MENKAFIR+ ISSUE DID NOT ARISE...THE ISSUE IS ONLY BEING RAISED NOW WHEN THE ELECTIONS ARE TO BE HELD,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: +THERE IS ONLY ONE REASON WHY PAS LEADERS LABEL THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS OFFICERS AS INFIDELS, AND THAT IS TO SECURE SEATS IN THE ELECTIONS.+ -- MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER CALLED ON MUSLIMS TO BE +BRAVE AND AGGRESSIVE+ IN SEEKING THE TRUTH AND IN BRINGING THOSE WHO HAD STRAYED FROM THE RELIGION BACK TO THE PATH ADVOCATED BY ALLAH.

HE SAID PAS MEMBERS AND FOLLOWERS +LOST THEIR MIND+ AND REGARDED PAS LEADER HAJI HADI AWANG AS A KIND OF PROPHET. THEY TOOK EVERYTHING HAJI HADI SPOKE AS THE TRUTH AND WOULD NOT QUESTION WHAT HE SAID.

+THIS DEVELOPMENT IS VERY DANGEROUS TO THE UNITY OF MUSLIMS AS IT WILL BRING ABOUT A DIVISION IN THE UMMAH,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HOPED PAS LEADERS WOULD DISCARD SUCH ATTITUDES, AVOID DEVIATIONIST TEACHINGS AND BASE THEIR STRUGGLE ON THE TRUTH.

HE SAID UMNO WAS NOT SCARED OF FACING PAS AT THE POLLS AS LONG AS THE OPPOSITION PARTY DID NOT MAKE USE OF RELIGION FOR ITS POLITICAL ENDS. -- BERNAMA

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