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`Opposition co-operation a marriage of convenience'

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SEPANG, Fri. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has described the Opposition parties' co-operation as a "marriage of convenience".

The Prime Minister said Opposition parties had contrary views and while one party wanted to set up an Islamic state, another wanted a "Malaysian Malaysia".

He said this after returning from a week-long state visit to Japan.

"One wants to set up a so-called Islamic state, the other doesn't want an Islamic state but a Malaysian Malaysia."

"(Parti) Keadilan (Nasional) is for everything. Being everything for everybody, they ended up stabbing their partners in the back by accepting everybody into their party."

Dr Mahathir was asked on his assessment of the strength of the Opposition.

"Keadilan's real objective is to get the release of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. There is no political agenda other than that although they say they have interest in reformasi, justice and all that," he said.

"I don't think they can work together. No common interest at all."

On Pas' proposal to accept non-Muslims as associate members, the Barisan Nasional chairman and Umno president said according to Pas' thinking, that would mean accepting infidels into the party.

Dr Mahathir alluded to earlier Pas statements said that co-operating with non-Muslims was wrong.

Pas had even branded Umno as infidels for co-operating with non-Muslims, he said.

"Are they serious about accepting non-Muslims as members of an Islamic party? For Pas, what is important is not Islam but getting votes. Their religion is votes only."

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