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`Malays should stop believing in magic and supernatural powers'

PUTRAJAYA, Mon. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was time the Malays stopped believing in magic and supernatural powers, including becoming invincible, as these perceptions were false and nonsensical.

The Prime Minister said the community had to realise that there was no such thing as becoming invincible after reciting some verses from the Quran.

"If people can truly become invincible through that, then Muslims would have ruled the world," he said after chairing a special Umno supreme council meeting at his official residence today.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, pointed out that the Malays must realise that even Prophet Muhammad suffered serious injuries during the Battle of Jabal Uhud.

"The uncle of the Prophet, Sayyidina Amir Hamzah, was killed in the battle," he said in reference to the teachings of the Al-Ma'unah group which staged the arms heist at two army camps.

The Al-Ma'unah group is said to promote the idea that it was capable of teaching its followers how to become invincible and bathe in boiling oil.

Dr Mahathir said the Malays had to realise that the only way to be able to be a strong community was through acquiring knowledge which would make them capable and competitive.

"We are committed to ensuring that the values held by the Muslims are all noble Islamic values which will make the Malay Muslims a competitive race, able to defeat any party in any field."

This, he added, would equip the Malays with a steely spirit (semangat waja) and make them successful.

"This is Umno's struggle for Islam and one which is more capable to help the Muslims rather than splitting them and depending on baseless practices."

On deviant groups which indiscriminately used the concept of Jihad (Holy War), Dr Mahathir said they used the term to justify their actions, especially criminal actions like the one carried out by the Al-Ma'unah group.

Asked how the Government would deal with the many silat groups which contained elements of Islamic teachings, Dr Mahathir said the matter would be examined.

"Many use the spiritual (ilmu kebatinan) sometimes to gain influence to enable them to commit criminal acts," he said.

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