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Sane people agree with leaders' definition

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CHAIRIL Anwar in "Heed the leaders' message" (NST, May 19) talks about the views of Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Badawi, during the recent Umno assembly, where they rejected extremist interpretations of Islam as espoused by a rival political party.

Both said Umno will not go the way of Pas in order to win votes. Abdullah also said he wanted Muslims to be what all Muslims are supposed to be - good Muslims who struggle for fairness, justice, are honest and incorruptible, and of high moral character and integrity.

Any right thinking and sane Malaysian would agree with Dr Mahathir and Abdullah's views on what Muslims should be.

But our problem is that not all is what it should be. There are Muslims who use Islam to win political support. There are Muslims who violate the basic principles of Islam. There are Muslims who find it so easy to label those of a different political thought as infidels.

The majority of Malaysians believe that Umno has a bigger share of good people and that is why the party has continued to receive support in general elections.

But I agree with Chairil Anwar when he prays that Umno members and leaders should heed the message conveyed by Dr Mahathir and Abdullah. Umno should realise that people support the party because the alternative cannot be stomached by reasonable and sane Malaysians.

But if Umno members and leaders do not uphold the image of the party by being good Muslims, then the consequences will be bad for not only the party, but for all Malaysians and the country. I, too, pray that I do not live to see that day.