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`Some ulama have caused disunity'

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the unhealthy activities of some ulama had caused disunity among Muslims.

He said their slander and allegations were not in keeping with their position as ulama.

Speaking to reporters at his Hari Raya open house at the Putra World Trade Centre, Abdullah said Muslims should not pay heed to such ulama as their activities would not contribute to the progress and development of Islam.

He said this when asked to comment on reports that some ulama were involved in politics and making slanderous allegations.

He said that Islam considered slander to be even more dangerous than committing murder.

"According to Islam, we need to watch our words ... we should not be saying things that lead to slander," he added.

Abdullah said Muslims must learn to speak good things and lead a good life. He also called on Muslims to put aside all forms of prejudice, enmity and fights and give priority to promoting brotherhood among Muslims.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Hari Raya message was clear in that Muslims must change their culture to truly reflect the Muslim culture - that is to reduce emphasis on the form of Islam but focus on the content of Islamic teachings that places importance on efforts to improve the lives of the people in this world and the next.

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