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`Progressive, modern and well-governed nation'

MALAYSIA has been listed as a progressive, modern and well-governed Muslim nation by a special edition of The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, Gerakan deputy president Datuk Kerk Choo Ting said.

He said the high rating was a reflection of Malaysia's standing in the Islamic world and that the country's constitutional system worked well.

Kerk said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's name was mentioned several times in the piece on Malaysia, which he said was objectively written.

"If we continue to support the present Federal Constitution, we will have no fear of a theocratic Islamic State being set up in Malaysia," Kerk told reporters at Gerakan's 30th annual delegates conference.

He added that Pas' definition of a theocratic Islamist State was one governed by a council of ulamas representing the highest governing party followed by other governing machineries and the judiciary.

He said Pas had adopted the form of an Islamic State like that of Afghanistan and Iran but this must be rejected by Malaysians.

Kerk said it was necessary to get the message down to the grassroots and the party had begun doing that, adding that it would be done on a moderate scale in the country's universities and colleges.

On education, he said many suggestions were made by delegates on Chinese schools.

"We have to have a united country with common interest that looked at the bigger picture," Kerk said.

On entry into universities and colleges, he said entry should be on merit and need, and the Cabinet had discussed the matter.

Kerk said once the concept was worked out, it would not be too difficult to implement.

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