

Dr M: Umno the real defender of Islam

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DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Umno, and not PAS, is the real defender of Islam although it does not have the word "Islam" in its name.

Thus, he said, Umno members had nothing to fear when facing PAS leaders who wore *jubah* (robes) and *serban* (turbans) because this did not necessarily denote good character.

"There are those who wear *ketayap* (skull cap) who commit rape.

"We don't feel guilty at all when we reject PAS hudud law because it is contrary to the real teachings of Islam, which emphasise fairness in everything," Dr Mahathir said in his winding up speech at the Umno general assembly yesterday.

Islam, he said, was a religion for all times and thus the Quran must be interpreted according to current needs based on developments in science and technology to ensure justice for all.

That, he said, was what Umno had always tried to do as part of its responsibility as the ruling party, to ensure Muslims were prepared to face challenges of the modern world.

He said Umno had fulfilled its social obligation by making Muslims stronger.

"We have reached the stage where we can send our army to Bosnia to help protect Muslims there, we don't have to beg for aid from richer nations and we can thumb our nose at those who criticise us.

"Can PAS do that? They said they wanted to go to Iraq to

fight the United States' forces, but when you want to take on anyone, you first need to weigh your strength.

"It will be foolish for me to take on Mike Tyson," he added.

PAS' teaching, Dr Mahathir said, would only bring disaster to Muslims by the misinterpretation of the Quran according to the party's whims.

He said, PAS would continue to be Umno's main enemy as it used religion as a political tool and had contributed to disunity among Muslims.

"PAS is actually born of the British policy of divide and rule. It is now a thorn in the flesh for the Malays as it has weakened

the Malays," he added.

Dr Mahathir said one of PAS greatest sins was to equate one of its leaders to God. "And when this leader used profanity, (PAS spiritual leader Datuk) Nik Aziz (Nik Mat) said that God also used profanity.

"I thought that when Nik Aziz said God also used profanity, most of its members would leave the party. Instead, they continue to defend his action.

"This is proof to show how successful PAS has been in using religion as a political tool that even when its leaders equate God to a thug, it continues to enjoy the undivided support of its members."



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