

Power-sharing not against Islamic teachings

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ISLĀM allows the sharing of-power with non-Muslims in the administration of an Islamic state, and as such the democratic practice in Malaysia is not in any way against the teachings of the religion.

Muslim scholars attending the inaugural World Conference of Islamic Scholars here have endorsed the fact that Malaysia is a progressive Islamic nation which could lead the way for Muslims.

Speaking at a Press conference at the end of the first of the three-day conference, event . . implementation committee chairman Datuk Nakhaie Ahmad said scholars also agreed on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's contention that Muslims should return to the fundamental teachings of the religion.

"There are numerous interpretations of the religion, some done at different times of civilisation and may not be suitable now, but Muslims can never go wrong if they re-

turn to the fundamentals.

"Islam is for the ummah and in practising Islam, the focus should be on the betterment and welfare of the ummah and not blind adherence to negative interpretations detrimental to the progress of Muslims," Nakhaie said.

He said scholars also agreed that it was not against Islamic principles for Muslim nations to adopt Western systems or concepts that were beneficial to the ummah.

Religious Adviser to the Prime Minister Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Othman, who was also present at the Press conference, said Dr Mahathir's speech during the opening, especially his stress on the need for Muslims to acquire skills and knowledge, was well received by the scholars.

Abdul Hamid said the Prime Minister's frank opinion on the division among Muslims and the need for scholars to unite for the sake of the religion was also lauded.