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## Return to basics of Al-Quran: Dr M

BY **ALYAA ALHADJRI** *the Sun - 24/9/2012*  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Muslim leaders tend to adopt the most "severe" punishment for a crime, including through pushing for implementation of hudud, in a bid to appear more Islamic than others.

Making this remark, former premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he believes such a situation arises from various contradicting interpretations of the Islamic teachings.

"I find that we now give less credence to what is found in the Al-Quran, but more to what is taught to us, the Sunnah and Hadith (sayings and doings of the Prophet), which are optional," he said.

He noted that it had led to problems among not only Muslim communities, but also in their dealings with others.

Mahathir said this in his address at the launch of International Planned Parenthood Federation's "High-Level Expert Consultation on Islam and Women's Health" here yesterday.

He said many Muslims are now "confused" as it is no longer possible to isolate themselves from other ideas, ideologies and values, predominantly from the Western world, some of which appear to be more liberal in their interpretations of Islam.

He cited the prescribed punishment under hudud law for Muslim couple found guilty of adultery - stoning to death - as example of an "extreme" interpretation of Islam.

"In the Al-Quran, in the case of *zina*, both men and women are punished to 100 strokes of the cane ... There is no mention about stoning to death.

"Surely some of us are so incensed by this severe punishment that we consider Islam to be unjust," said Mahathir, adding that Islam in its essence advocates justice rather than mere punishment.