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DPM: Tok Guru a moderate leader to emulate

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Final farewell: Nik Abduh (right) placing flowers on his father's grave. — Bernama

KUCHING: Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat was a moderate leader to be emulated, says Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

Muhyiddin described the late Kelantan Menteri Besar and PAS spiritual leader as a great humanitarian.

"He was a smart politician. Even though he was in PAS, he was a moderate leader. His passing is a great loss to Islam and humanitarian values," he said.

The Umno deputy president, who referred to Nik Aziz as a "political icon", said Nik Aziz set an example as a fair leader.

"On behalf of myself and my colleagues, my condolences to the late Tok Guru's family. I too feel very sad to lose such a great leader, who everyone knew. As a politician, he served Kelantan as a Menteri Besar and he also spear-headed PAS' growth.

"We hope his family will stay strong through this difficult time," he told reporters at Bau Civic Centre, about 30km from Kuching, where he

was presenting flood aid.

The Council of Churches of Malaysia expressed its deepest condolences to the family of Nik Aziz, saying Malaysians had lost an "exemplary leader".

Its secretary-general Rev Dr Hermen Shastri said the heads of churches remembered the time when a courtesy call was made to Nik Aziz's office in 2010 to get acquainted with him and obtained his assurance that he would take care of the needs of Christians in Kelantan.

"We pray the rich and spiritual legacy he has left in regard to his person and his leadership will remain as an inspiration to other political leaders to emulate," he said in a press release.

Yayasan IMalaysia chairman Dr Chandra Muzaffar also expressed condolences to Nik Aziz's family and the Kelantan people.

He said Malaysians would remember Tok Guru and praise his contributions to Malaysia based on moderation, responsibility and high integrity.