

## **Dr Mahathir denies being anti-Hadith, questions integrity of ulama**

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**OLEH THE MALAYSIA INSIDER**

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (pic) has defended himself against criticisms of being anti-Hadith by questioning if Muslims should accept anything delivered to them by those fluent in Arabic, even when it contradicts the teachings of Islam.

The former prime minister was responding to attacks directed at him after throwing his support behind Malay scholar Dr Kassim Ahmad.

"It is very dangerous and confusing when anyone, just because he is fluent in Arabic and has a degree in Islamic studies, is declared a religious scholar," Dr Mahathir wrote in his [blog](#) yesterday.

"The disunity among the Muslim community of various sects is caused by people like these. Their followers have been enemies and have been committing murder for decades.

"There is no tolerance among them, when the al-Quran clearly asks of us to not even be enemies with people of different faiths, unless they see us as enemies."

According to Dr Mahathir, Muslims are weak today because the teachings of "main scholars" cannot be criticised and must be given undivided loyalty.

"Labelling people just because they do not agree with one's point of view is the way of those who are not open to debate. Just accept what is being alleged by those who are not thinking. Do not use your common sense bestowed by Allah because apparently it is prohibited in Islam.

"I am now labelled as anti-Hadith because I am said to be a supporter of Kassim Ahmad, who has been given the same label," he said.

"What about those who prioritise the Hadith as opposed to Allah's divine message that is found in the al-Quran that we accept as our divine decree from Allah? As for adultery, what is the law in the al-Quran? And what is in the Hadith?

"Which one is more important... the revelation and divine decree of Allah or the Hadith which is a story that has been carried over the generations by ordinary men, then tested and rejected by Hadith experts, who are also ordinary people, 200 years later?

"Is it wrong for us to pick al-Quran which is clear and which did not command one to shoot the woman accused of adultery with a machine gun?" Dr Mahathir said.

Kassim is currently being investigated by the Federal Territory Islamic Religious Department (Jawi) over controversial statements he made at "The Thoughts of Kassim Ahmad: A Review", a seminar organised earlier this month by the Perdana Leadership Foundation, of which Dr Mahathir is the patron.

Among others, Kassim had accused some religious scholars in Malaysia of imitating the "priesthood caste" system, questioned the use of the Hadith to interpret the Quran, and described the Prophet as "just a messenger of Allah".

In his lecture titled "The Nation's Direction in the Next 30 Years", Kassim also questioned the hijab (Islamic headscarf) worn by Muslim women, saying "the hair is not part of the aurat" (parts of the body which need to be covered according to Islamic teachings).

The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (Jakim) director-general Datuk Othman Mustapha said they would question Kassim on his controversial views.

In its Friday sermon, Jakim reminded Muslims of the obligation to believe, accept and obey the Hadith, saying the words of the Prophet were divinely inspired and the source of Islamic law.

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