

'Religious Corps to boost morale';

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the formation of the Religious Corps in the Armed Forces would heighten the morale of fighting troops and the move had no other purpose than for the security of the country.

The Prime Minister said at the close of a seminar attended by senior religious teachers in the armed services that their duties would not be confined to performing rites but would also include spiritual instruction that would boost the level of commitment in the military.

The Religious Corps would "ensure the full participation of religious teachers so that they will feel a part of, and not separated from, the armed services," and not from the point of view of worship only.

"I am sure that the Religious Corps will improve religious observance and that they (the troops) will understand their responsibilities toward religion, the people and the nation," he added.

Dr Mahathir said that enhanced religious

leadership would help foster a highly organised, disciplined and effective armed forces.

Freedom

National security was not merely a question of "protecting territory, but also to protect our freedom, the freedom which allows us to practice our own religion without interference."

Also present at the Prime Minister's closing address were Deputy Defence Minister Abang Abu Bakar Mustapha and Armed Forces Chief of

Staff General Tan Sri Ghazali Seth.

● Dr Mahathir sharing a light moment with former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Jen Tunku Osman Jawa (third from right) and the president of the Malaysian Ex-Servicemen Association, Jen Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Bidin (second from right), before attending a *tahiti* ceremony at Madrasah Hementoh to mark Army Day.