

Pas struggle merely to get votes, says PM

BOTA KANAN (Perak), Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the struggle by Pas was not in any way connected with Islam but was merely to get seats in the elections.

Explaining the background of Pas to some 9,000 people at a *muhibbah* and unity gathering at the Bakri Rais mini-stadium, Dr Mahathir said:

"If they (Pas) are really sincere in their struggle for Islam, they would have done so when the country was under British rule."

The Prime Minister said Pas was formed af-

ter the Malays were solidly united in opposing the formation of the Malayan Union and thus Umno was formed.

"After realising that through democracy, seats, opportunities and power can be achieved Pas was formed," he said.

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He added the obsession for power prodded Pas to make use of the Quran to mislead the people.

"They (Pas) dare to split the Malays and Muslims who were united before.

"But since Pas came into being, there were

couples who had to be re-married because the previous marriage ceremony was not legal."

Citing examples which are causing disunity among Muslims, Dr Mahathir said those who died cannot be buried at certain graveyards because the land is owned by infidels (kafir) and animals slaughtered by Umno members cannot be consumed by Muslims.

He said Pas supporters even dared to conclude that "our great-great grand fathers who were buried at such graveyards were infidels".

The people were also told to be wary of a group who would come to rural areas quoting verses from the Quran.

Earlier, Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ramli Ngah Talib warned the people not to fall prey to undesirable people who claimed that it was high time for a new Government.

"Do not try something new. The Government has been governing the nation for the past 30 years and we have to be wary of anything that is new," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said the people should work hard to be more productive to better their standard of living.

About noon, the Prime Minister attended Friday prayers at Masjid Bota Kanan. He later visited the country's largest hatchery for terrapin (fresh water tortoise) accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, and local dignitaries led by the Menteri Besar.

Speaking to about 1,000 Umno and Barisan Nasional component party members at a fund raising dinner organised by the Umno Gopeng division, Dr Mahathir said very often Malaysians do not realise they are among the luckiest people in the world.

Daily fighting in Northern Ireland and Arab countries like Lebanon should make them grateful to be Malaysians.

He hoped Malaysians, particularly the Muslims, would practise moderation and be tolerant towards others as taught by Islam.

The Prime Minister also hoped that Malaysians were proud that they were staying in a country full of natural resources.

He urged the people to have self confidence "for we have the ability to do anything we want if we put our minds to it".