

Mahathir on opposition's polls gimmick

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MALACCA, Thurs. — Pas is touting its intention to seek an injunction to stop the general election should it be called during the Haj season as a campaign gimmick, the Prime Minister said today.

The leaders of the party know that they have no grounds but are merely going through the motions as a ploy to show up the Government as being insensitive to the spiritual needs of the Muslims and portraying the party as the champion of Islam.

"This is what it will do as soon as we fix the date, provided the date is within the Haj period," he told the Press after opening the Batu Berendam Umno division building.

Though Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad did not name Pas, the refer-

ence to the party was obvious when he spoke on the issue in his speech earlier.

"The party has advised its members not to perform the Haj as it feels that the election will be held during the season."

While the Government will not violate any laws should it decide to hold the polls during the Haj, "the party seems to attach more importance to the election than religious obligation.

Concept

"That is why it is discouraging its members from performing the Haj lest the polls are held. For the party leaders, election is more important."

He is confident that should the Government decide to hold the election during the Haj, the party will not succeed in postponing it as there is

no legal ground.

The Prime Minister, who is also Umno president, is confident that support for the party will continue to grow.

Umno is a mass-based party whose members are mostly common people.

"It is a moderate party. On its left is one extreme party and on its right is another.

"Both are always devising means to defeat Umno and the Barisan Nasional," he said.

The party on the right has divided the peninsula into East and West where it has different stands on its concept of the Islamic State for both the divisions.

It has also pronounced fellow Muslims as *kafir* without proper investigation and without proper reference to the Quran and the *hadith*.

The party on the left is still exploiting such is-

suues as culture, language and education even though these issues have been settled.

The party only appeals to one community and does not seem to attach much importance to cooperation between the races.

"It is true that there is still no complete harmony but we are working towards it."

He said this party did not seem to care if it causes disharmony between the races by their actions. But they have failed in their efforts to undermine whatever harmony that has been achieved.

Dr Mahathir said Umno had an important role to play. It must continue to foster cooperation between the races and effect compromise which will bring benefit to everyone in the country.