

State stand on proposal, Semangat and Pas told

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KANGAR, Mon. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today asked Semangat 46 and Pas leaders to categorically state whether they support the proposal by the Chinese educationist movement leaders who want to have more than one official language and religion. He said he recently received a letter from the movement requesting that Mandarin be made an official language and that there should be more than one official culture and religion.

The movement leaders, he said, had also asked that there be Chinese schools for the Chinese, Indian

schools for the Indians and Malay schools for the Malays.

Dr Mahathir, who is on a one-day visit to Perlis, was asked to comment during a Press conference on the DAP's appointment of former United Chinese School Committees Association Malaysia president Lim Fong Seng and former executive secretary Lee Ban Chen as party adviser and vice-chairman respectively. The two had earlier said they would be contesting on DAP tickets in the coming general election.

Dr Mahathir, who is the Umno president and Bari-

san Nasional chairman, said he wanted an immediate reply from Semangat 46, which is collaborating with the DAP and Pas.

He said he also wanted Pas leaders' reply on these proposals as they too were linked to the DAP through Semangat 46.

Dr Mahathir said he wanted to know whether Pas and Semangat 46 would campaign for these leaders.

Later, addressing a large gathering of Barisan Nasional election workers at Sekolah Menengah Syed Hassan this evening, he again referred to these issues.

Dr Mahathir regretted

that after 33 years of Independence, Mr Lim and Mr Lee were still questioning the status of Bahasa Malaysia and Islam as official language and religion respectively.

In fact, he said, the status of Bahasa Malaysia and Islam had been agreed to by the Chinese and Indians through their respective parties, MCA and MIC, in the Government.

Similarly, Umno and the Malays have acknowledged the freedom of other races to practise their own religion and language. The Chinese and Indians are also free to pursue education in their own languages.