

# Pas to face action for organising gathering

NST 12 DEC 1991

ALOR STAR, Wed. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said today action will be taken against Pas for organising the illegal *Jihadul Akbar* gathering recently to commemorate the death of 14 Pas supporters in the 1985 Memali incident.

He said police had submitted to him a report on the gathering, stating that it was held without police permission.

"The Government sees no reason why action cannot be taken against Pas because they have ignored the laws," Dr Mahathir told newsmen at the Sultan Abdul Halim airport here.

The Prime Minister was asked by newsmen whether the Government would take action against Pas for flouting the law by organising the gathering to commemorate the death of Haji Ibrahim Libya and 13 of his followers.

The gathering was held for three days in Kampung

Memali last month despite a warning by the police that the organisers had not obtained a permit.

Dr Mahathir said the police would decide on the action to be taken against Pas.

He said he was sad that Pas, which claimed to champion the Islamic struggle, had gone beyond the Islamic principles.

"They held the Memali gathering claiming that their supporters had died as martyrs but what about the four policemen who were killed in the tragedy," the Prime Minister said.

"Our policemen have sacrificed to protect the country from communist terrorism and it is their sacrifices that enable us to protect democracy.

"Our country could have been ruled by the communists and Pas would not have existed if not for their sacrifices," Dr Mahathir said.

He said the police had

never used force in any incident except in Memali.

"Police were forced to take action in the Memali incident because the Memali people had attacked and shot dead four policemen."

Dr Mahathir said Pas should realise that the policemen who died in the tragedy too had families.

"I don't see any reason why the Pas supporters who died in the tragedy were proclaimed to be martyrs and not the policemen," he added.

Dr Mahathir, who met members of the Kedah/Perlis Ricemillers Association at the airport, said Pas should not turn the problem of the non-bumiputera ricemillers in Jerlun into a political issue.

He said the ricemillers' complaint was not a political problem.

"If Pas wants to use the matter as a political issue then we want to know what

they can do to resolve the problem."

The Prime Minister was commenting on reports that the ricemillers were unhappy that none of the non-bumiputera ricemills in Jerlun was appointed as the National Padi and Rice Board's buying centre.

Dr Mahathir said the ricemillers had not threatened the Government to resolve the issue during the Jerlun State by-election but it was Pas which was making an issue out of it.

"The problem faced by the ricemillers can be resolved. If we can find solutions to other bigger problems, we can also find a solution to this problem," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid would meet the ricemillers tomorrow to discuss the problem.

Association president Saw Kok Oon said he was happy with the meeting with the Prime Minister.