

# PM sad to see State mosques exploited for political ends

KOTA BARU, Feb. 20. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he was sad to see some mosques and *imam* in Kelantan being exploited for the interest of a political party.

When he went to pray at the Bukit Marak mosque today, about 16km from here, the Prime Minister found that the regular *imam* had been replaced by a youth who turned the Friday sermon into a political *ceramah*.

"I wasn't sure whether I was performing the Friday prayers or attending a political function," he told reporters after chairing the State Umno liaison meeting here today.

Dr Mahathir said he deeply regretted the methods used to exploit mosques and the religion in the State for political purposes.

Villagers who attended Friday prayers with Dr Ma-

hathir were surprised to see the new *imam*.

In his sermon, the *imam* who is a full-time administrative officer with the State Islamic Affairs Religious Council, said comparatively the Islamic political system was the best to follow.

Youth and Sports Minister Senator Datuk Annuar Musa, who was also present at the mosque, quickly got up after the prayers and "thanked" the council for sending their man to lead the prayers.

Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali arrived here for a one-day visit.

They were met at the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport by the Kelantan Umno leaders and heads of Federal Government departments and agencies.

From the airport, the Prime Minister and his wife were driven to Seri Puri, the residence of Annuar in Bu-

kit Marak, 19km from here.

After prayers he left for Seri Puri and then to the State Umno building here to chair the State liaison committee meeting.

Dr Mahathir broke fast at Seri Puri with local leaders. Speaking at the function, Dr Mahathir took Pas to task for its inconsistent stand over the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1993 which seeks to remove the Rulers' immunity in their personal capacity.

He said it was clear that the party was using religion for its political interest and would not hesitate to sacrifice religion for political purposes. Dr Mahathir said Pas then gave numerous excuses for not supporting the amendments.

A big crowd including former Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Yaacob and other State Umno leaders attended the breaking of fast function. He also said the disuni-

ty among the Muslims in the world was due to power struggles among them.

Meanwhile, Dr Siti Hasmah on behalf of the Kelantan Poverty Foundation (YKK), presented cash donations to 800 poor folk in a simple ceremony at Seri Puri.

Also present were Annuar's wife Datin Rosniah Abdul Rahman and the foundation's chairman Alwi Yusoff. Alwi is also the minister's political secretary.

Alwi said most of the recipients, who received RM30 each, were old and could no longer work.

He added that YKK donated about RM24,000 to the poor today, which included an undisclosed amount from Annuar himself.

A recipient, Minah Mat Amin, 60, from Kampung Dewan Benta said this was the first time she had received donations from a welfare body.