

Study Sunday weekends, Mahathir tells three states

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ALOR STAR: The Prime Minister said yesterday that the three states which have yet to switch their weekends to Sunday should conduct a study on the matter.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said observing the Sunday off-day was not against Islamic teachings as Muslims could go for Friday prayers from their work places.

He said states which observed the Sunday off-day gave time off to Muslims to perform their Friday prayers.

"It is much easier to perform the *Jemaah*

prayers on a working day and return to work after that," he said in reply to questions after meeting state executive councilors and heads of department here.

Johor and Perlis switched their weekends to Sunday on Jan 1 — leaving only Kedah, Terengganu and Kelantan to observe Friday weekends.

Dr Mahathir said mosques in the Federal Territory and other states which observed Sunday weekends were full on Fridays.

"We have observed that some Muslims used the Friday off-day to take their families out, or go fishing, and missed Fri-

day prayers," he said.

He said when the British observed the Sunday off-day for the Federated Malay States and Straits Settlements, the five non-federated states wanted Friday as their off-day which they claimed to be a "Sabbath Day" for the Muslims.

"But there is no such thing as a Sabbath Day in Islam," he said.

In Kuala Terengganu, *Mentri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad* said the state government would conduct such a study.

"Any change can only be done after we have consulted everybody," he told reporters.