

# PM slams Kelantan's hudud laws

4 - MAR 1994

By STEPHEN THEN

KOTA BARU: The hudud laws passed recently by the PAS-led Government in Kelantan is a set of laws devised for political and selfish interests and not for the universal welfare of Muslims.

"Our studies up to now show that the hudud laws devised by PAS are not in accordance with the true teachings of Islam," Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad added.

"The laws are the result of the understanding and research conducted by those

with very shallow knowledge of Islam and the *Syariah*."

Worst of all, he said yesterday, such laws were made by a group of people with specific intentions which had nothing to do with the interest of Islam.

"Therefore, the hudud laws cannot be accepted and should be rejected at this stage," he told about 5,000 people at Pusat Bahasa Arab in Nilam Puri, near here.

Dr Mahathir, who is on a one-day visit to Kelantan, was there to meet and break fast with the people.

He said that no one should

claim that his interpretation of the Quran was more accurate just because he understood Arabic.

He pointed out that differences in the interpretation of Islamic teachings happened throughout the ages even among the Arabs because of differences in commonly-held beliefs or differences in circumstances or time period.

"PAS' claim that those who do not accept its hudud laws are against Islam is itself against Islamic teachings. Islam allows us to accept or reject any human interpreta-

tion.

"To determine if PAS' hudud laws are the hudud laws of Islam, there is no better way than evaluating if the punishment to be meted out is fair or otherwise," he said.

Citing rape cases as an example, he said that according to the laws passed by PAS, four witnesses were required and they must be persons of good character.

"Such witnesses are hard to come by. Firstly, a rapist will not commit rape in front of other people. Secondly, a just man will not stand by and watch when such an act

was committed in front of him.

"If they watch without trying to stop the act, they can be considered accomplices."

Dr Mahathir said it was possible for people to be forced to helplessly witness the crime without being able to help, such as in a war.

He also said that PAS laws also did not accept circumstantial evidence to show that a person was actually raped, making it difficult to punish the offenders.

"Not only has PAS distorted the laws, but it had caused Islam to become a subject of

criticism by others, aside from creating division among Muslims," he said.

Dr Mahathir said there was justification to reject PAS' hudud laws if they could cause tension and problems in society or weaken Islam as a whole.

He said a special body would be set up to study Kelantan's hudud laws.

"It will be made up of Islamic experts and criminology experts who have no interests apart from Islam and are knowledgeable in other religions, in civil and criminal laws," he said.