

# Dr M: Pas lied to the people over Al Arqam ban

JITRA, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Pas had lied to the people over the Government's actions in banning Al Arqam and its stance on *hudud* law.

He said although Pas openly supported the Government in banning Al Arqam, the party had instead told the people that the Government was suppressing Islamic missionary work in the country.

"Pas president Fadzil Noor and Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Aziz Nik Mat had agreed with the Government on banning Al Arqam, but they told the people in their ceramahs that the Government had suppressed Muslim missionaries.

"If Pas agrees that Al Arqam's teachings were not against the true teachings of Islam, then the party could be concluded as agreeing to the movement's belief that its leader, Ashaari Muhammad, had God-like attributes and had also met Prophet Muhammad," he said, adding that it was Pas' nature to claim that the party was based on Islam but failed to practise it.

"I want to know if Pas members believe Ashaari's claims," he told reporters after opening the public library here.

Dr Mahathir said, this when asked on his earlier closed-door meeting with Kedah Umno leaders at Wisma Darul Aman.

The Prime Minister said the meeting discussed various allegations by Pas and on Umno, and that Pas had misinformed the people of the contents of his letter on *hudud* law to Nik Aziz.

"Nik Aziz had only read half the contents to give the impression that the Government rejected *hudud* law when in fact, we had only rejected the party's criminal code.

"We had actually rejected Pas' criminal code, not the *hudud* law, but he (Nik Aziz) hid the other half of the contents of my letter from the people," he said.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir said it was vital that Malaysians kept abreast with the latest information and changes taking place and that they acquired the necessary knowledge to face challenges.

"We need our society to be well-informed and equipped with the necessary knowledge so that we could stave off any attempt to belittle us.

"By acquiring the necessary knowledge, we could become more progressive and would not be easily fooled by our enemies."

The RM895,000 library, opened in February, provides various facilities including CD-Multimedia, book loans and advisory services.

Also present were Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff, State Education, Youth and Sports Development Committee chairman Datuk Azizan Taib.