

No plan to stop Pas using 'Islam'

PASIR MAS, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Government has no plans to stop Pas using the word *Islam* in its name as this might be misinterpreted as a political move.

"While we feel that we should do it, we do not want the people to misinterpret it or turn the whole thing into a political issue," he said when replying to questions from reporters on whether the Government would consider banning political parties from using the word *Islam* in the name of their organisations.

Dr Mahathir said the British had allowed Pas to form the party using Islam as its name because the former's intention was to create a split among the Muslims in the country.

He also said when the Government did something for the good of the religion, there were bound to be people who would quickly politicise the move.

On his meeting with Kelantan Umno division problem chairmen today, Dr Mahathir said, he talked about the role they should play and also the party's stand and the importance of placing the interest of the party above other things.

The Prime Minister had earlier met State Umno leaders at Istana Dusun Green, the residence of Pasir Mas Umno member Tengku Iskandar Tengku Ahmad, here.

"We do not want to give priority to certain individuals or candidates. What is important is the party. If the

party wins, the candidates will win," he added.

Asked to comment on the Pas request that Umno comes out with its own hudud laws, Dr Mahathir said Umno's hudud law was in the Quran.

"We will follow what is written in the Quran. What is important in Islam is justice, and Islam does not say we must do this and that.

"We will do things that will not create problems for Muslims or contradict the teachings of Islam," he added.

Dr Mahathir said what Pas did was make laws that were contrary to the teachings of Islam and claiming them to be hudud laws.

"This happened because religion has been mixed with party politics and in the end, it is religion that suffers.

"Hence, we are against mixing religion with party politics," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno could co-operate with Pas on matters relating to religion but was against mixing religion with party politics.

"We will end up getting various forms of religious interpretations that are aimed at generating the support for the party and not the religion," he added.

To another question, Dr Mahathir said the Government could, under the Constitution, take action against Pas if the latter proceeds to implement the hudud law in Kelantan.

On the arrest of Arqam members, the Prime Minister said it was to help them return to the right path.