

Pas spreading lies, says Dr M

By Manan Osman

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Pas, (Parti Islam SeMalaya) or the Pan Malayan Islamic Party, was spreading lies by distorting Umno's suggestion that Pas drop the word "Islam" from its name.

He said it was doing this to confuse the people.

The Prime Minister also said that he was upset with Pas for distorting his speech at November's Umno general assembly in support of Umno members' call for Pas to drop the word Islam from the party's name.

"I had expected this and mentioned in my speech (when winding up the Umno assembly) that Pas will exploit the matter to spread lies and confuse the people," he said after chairing a three-hour Umno supreme council meeting at the Putra World Trade Centre.

He said what Pas was doing was not in accordance with Islam. "If it abides by the teachings of Islam, it

would not have distorted Umno's suggestion."

He said in view of the party's irresponsible action, it should drop Islam from its name.

Dr Mahathir also called on the media to take note of Umno's decision to have the word Islam dropped from the names of political parties like Pas and not to drop the religion.

"They can use any name like like but not Islam."

He said Pas had no right to use the word Islam in its name since it did not practise Islamic teachings as reflected in its actions lately when it purposely distorted statements made by Umno.

For example, he said a Pas poster put up (on Nov 27) to invite people to its *ceramah* had clearly showed that it had exploited the matter.

He said its heading was misleading, using the words "buang Islam" to give the impression that Umno wanted to get rid of Islam, which was untrue.

The meeting, among others, discussed the Pas alle-

gations, which it considered as among the problems which had to be faced in the forthcoming general election.

Asked whether Umno would take legal action against Pas, he said at the moment he felt that the people should be given a proper explanation of the lies made by the party.

"This has to be rectified first or Pas will turn it into a political issue," he said, adding, however, that it was normal for the party to make an issue out of nothing.

He said Umno had tried to unite Muslims under one umbrella but was hampered by Pas.

He said other countries may consider Malaysia an example of a good Government or reflecting the success of Muslims, but Pas could not see this.

The party, he said, was more concerned about winning the election.

However, Dr Mahathir was confident Umno could overcome the lies spread by

the Opposition.

Dr Mahathir, in his opening as well as the winding-up speeches at the assembly, had touched at length on the use of Islam in Pas's name.

He had said that the word was a divisive element and that it was a legacy of the British divide-and-rule policy.

On the action to drop four pro-tem committee members of the Kulim-Bandar Baru division who opposed the nomination of its head, Datuk Kadir Sheikh Fadzir, to recontest his seat in the next general election, Dr Mahathir asked his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to answer.

Anwar said the action was endorsed at today's meeting but did not elaborate.

After the meeting, Dr Mahathir and the supreme council members attended *tahlil* prayers for the late Tun Mustapha Datu Harun and former Deputy Rural Development Minister Yas-sin Kamari.