

PM 'disgusted' by Pas' assumption

By K.P. Waran

SEPANG, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was disgusted with the assumption by Pas that the Government would hold the general election during the *haj* season, thus depriving its members the chance to vote.

The Prime Minister such assumption reflected the arrogance of Pas leaders. They seemed to claim that only Pas supporters — not Umno supporters — go to Mecca to perform the *haj*.

"These leaders claim to be religious but they continue to display unIslamic attitudes and utter unIslamic statements," Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said in response to Press queries on the matter.

The Prime Minister said this after the ground-breaking ceremony for the KL International Airport here.

Yesterday, Pas president Fadzil Noor said that there was a possibility the general election would be held during the *haj* season to provide an advantage to the Barisan Nasional.

Fadzil said that the BN would not be affected as not many of its voters were involved in the pilgrimage.

Rebutting this claim, Dr Mahathir wanted to know whether Fadzil had done any study which showed that only Pas members performed the *haj*.

"This is the type of arrogance that we find in Pas. They continue to claim that only their supporters go to Mecca...

"I have been to Mecca... I did not join Pas. Many other people including those who are in Umno perform their pilgrimage.

"I am disgusted with the assumption by Pas that if we hold the election during the *haj* season than it meant we do not want Pas members to vote," he said.

Fadzil said the official *haj* flights from Malaysia would begin on April 1, adding that there was a likelihood that Parliament would be dissolved before its sitting on April 10.

Dr Mahathir was also asked to comment on an interview in the March 24 issue of the *Asiaweek* where Tun Daim Zainuddin was asked if it was true that he (Daim) was the most powerful man in Malaysia after

the Prime Minister to which Daim had replied that it should be Anwar.

Dr Mahathir said some foreign magazines continued to write articles in a bid to get Government leaders to quarrel among themselves.

Dr Mahathir said: "What is important is that we have an effective team. We are all very important people. We all work together as team.

"There is no such thing as first, second, third, fourth or fifth most powerful.

"It looks like the foreign magazine wants us to quarrel," he said.

Asiaweek had asked Daim to comment about a new book which described him as the most powerful man after the Prime Minister.