

# PM: Opposition has no alternative programme to benefit the people

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KOTA BARU, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said the opposition parties have no justifiable reasons to ask the people to vote for them other than wanting to grab power.

The Prime Minister said while other countries continued to be impressed with Malaysia's achievements, the opposition parties continued to criticise the Gov-

ernment although they have not put forward any alternative programme to benefit the people.

Dr Mahathir said: "The opposition parties seem only interested in grabbing power. They do not care that since independence the people have benefited much from the Alliance and the Barisan Nasional, which have helped improve the standard of living and pushed the country towards industrialisation.

"That is why I believe that the opposition parties have

no justifiable reasons to ask the people to vote for them," he said.

He added that the campaign mounted by Pas was aimed at permanently dividing the Muslim community.

It had been urging its supporters not to co-operate with Umno supporters, attend mosques where the *imam* is not a Pas supporter or eat meat slaughtered by Muslims who are not Pas members or supporters.

He said this during a meet-the-*rakyat* session at Kampong Kadok, about

20km from here.

"Ideological and political differences will always be there but after the election all Muslims should unite and work towards improving the status of their community and not become enemies forever.

"But this is what Pas wants. Pas leaders also deliberately misinterpret the Quran to lead their members on the wrong path. Islam has always advocated

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# PM sees wind of change in Kelantan

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co-operation among the *um-mah*.

"Pas leaders, however, claim that Islam allows Muslims to bad-mouth and embark on a smear campaign. I hope the people of Kelantan will realise the tactics used by the Opposition in the State to hood-wink the people," he added.

He said Pas does not want its members to co-operate or mix with Umno supporters as it fears they would find out that the preachings of its leaders are false.

He urged the people of Kelantan to make a rational assessment of the benefits under the previous BN Government and the present Pas-Semangat 46 Government before voting.

On BN's chances in Kelantan, the Prime Minister said the situation looked much better than before.

"I have made three visits and find there is a wind of change in favour of the BN," he said, adding that this was a good sign for the BN to form the State Government.

Asked to comment on the issue raised by the Opposition in Kelantan that the Kelantan-born corporate leaders would grab the land in the State if BN wins, Dr Mahathir said:

"That is the problem with the Opposition. Each time

we want to do something for the benefit of the people, they oppose it and put fear into the people to go against the Government.

"The State Government has such a tight control over the State to the extent the State has remained backward. This has embarrassed the Malays and Islam.

"We want to prove to the world that Muslims can rule and develop their country. Pas talks about progress with Islam, but when others want to help the State they only bad-mouth them, which shows they do not practise what the religion preaches," he said.

He said Pas leaders' strong influence on their members had resulted in many of them turning their backs on the actual meanings of the Quran and instead preferring to believe Pas' interpretation of the holy book.

He said the Federal Government was duty-bound to correct this since Pas' preaching is veering away from Islamic tenets similar to what had happened to the Al-Arqam movement.

Earlier, in Jeli, Dr Mahathir said Pas leaders often proclaimed themselves as *ulamak* (religious scholars) or *tok guru*, but many of them were not qualified to hold such titles.

"They set poor examples

for their followers to emulate and have brought disgrace to the genuine *ulamak* and *tok guru*," he told a large gathering at the meet-the-people session.

Dr Mahathir also urged the people in Jeli to vote for the BN because the State had been left far behind in terms of development due to Pas' inability to carry out beneficial projects.

"It is a shame for Kelantan to remain backward as it will reflect badly on the Malays in the country.

"Outsiders may assume that the Malays on their own cannot administer or bring development," he said, adding that voters must support the BN to enable the coalition to correct this wrong perception.

Dr Mahathir later received applications from 2,015 former Pas and Parti Melayu Semangat 46 members to join Umno. The forms were submitted by former S46 Jeli division secretary Ramli Mamat.

The Prime Minister also presented a cheque worth RM300,000 to build 100 units of houses for the poor in Jeli to Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed, who is also BN candidate for the Jeli parliamentary seat.

The Prime Minister also said that countries experiencing unrest, including Somalia, wanted to learn

multi-racial Malaysia's secret of a stable and harmonious Government. This was proof that the BN's formula of uniting its people and bringing development to all is a model to be emulated.

Dr Mahathir said Somalia's two major warring factions want Malaysia to help solve the conflict in the war-torn African nation.

"This is sufficient proof that the BN's administrative style and its concept of sharing the nation's wealth with all its people is accepted as a model for the world."

"After attempts by the United Nations to broker a peace plan in Somalia had failed, representatives of the warring factions had visited Malaysia and had discussions with me to help bring peace to the country.

"They are convinced that Malaysia's experience in bringing development to a multi-racial nation would help in bringing similar success to Somalia," he said.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa, who is the BN candidate for the Peringat parliamentary seat, and BN candidates for the State seats, Datuk Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir (Melor), Ariffin Mahmood (Ketereh) and Soberi Shafie (Kadok).