

AT THE DEWAN RAKYAT YESTERDAY

# Rehabilitation centre for deviationists

THE Government will set up a faith rehabilitation centre (*pusat pemulihan aqidah*) to rehabilitate Muslims who make attempts to become apostates and those who spread deviationist teachings, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister told the Dewan Rakyat during question time that the Federal-level centre would be set up under the Seventh Malaysian Plan.

He said the various States had to give their approval for the offenders to be rehabilitated there.

He added that the Federal centre was necessary as not all States had provisions for rehabilitation.

Dr Mahathir was respond-

ing to an oral question from Abdul Hadi Awang (Pas-Marang).

He added that for the Federal Territory, a Bill would be tabled at the Dewan Rakyat to enable offenders to undergo this long-term rehabilitation.

Dr Mahathir said at present, offenders were dealt with based on the various State Enactments.

For instance, under section 66 of the Malacca Syariah Criminal Offences Enactment 1981, those who made attempts to become apostates were liable to be detained at the Islamic Guidance Centre for not more than six months, or to three years' imprisonment or both.

He said this showed that

remedial efforts had to be expanded as the enactment did not cover all offenders of Syariah laws.

To a supplementary question from Hadi on whether the book *Mustika Hadis* published by the Prime Minister's Department served as the *fatwa* on apostasy, Dr Mahathir said it was not a *fatwa* but could be used as an example.

To another supplementary question from Badrudin Amirudin (BN-Yan) on whether the centre would also house politicians who were guilty of deviating from Islamic teachings, Dr Mahathir said Islamic laws did not differentiate between prominent people and others.