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Mahathir-PAS

PAS' EXISTENCE ONLY TO DIVIDE THE MALAYS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

ALOR SETAR, March 21 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight that the existence of Pas is only to divide the Malays.

He said the party divided the Muslims and separated them from other Muslims.

Pas considered Islam as politics and not as a religion and to them Islam could be used to win votes, he said at a public gathering at Stadium Darul Aman, here.

"The Muslims don't accept the interpretation of Islam by Pas," he told 50,000 people including members of the Barisan Nasional component parties.

He said the Pas struggle was to win votes and to become elected representatives of the people and not to champion Islam.

Dr Mahathir cited the case of two imams leading two separate congregations, praying at separate mosques and separate burial grounds from other Muslims as examples of division of Muslims as propagated by PAS.

"Pas claims that BN is not Islam. Are the things that we do to pacify the various communities not in line with Islamic teachings?" he asked.

On the other hand, Pas participated in rioting, throwing stone, throwing molotov cocktail and burning police motorcycles.

Pas capitalised the issue that arose from the sacking of an Umno leader who was subsequently charged in court.

"Pas is prepared to be together with the reform movement to win votes," he said.

He said Pas was now using the Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (Adil) leader as a tool to fish for votes.

Adil, he said, had tested its strength in Sabah but as there was no response it dared not stand in the State Assembly election recently and instead collaborated with Pas.

The prime minister said Pas was willing to work with anyone including satan to fish for votes and not because of Islam.

"Islam does not belong to any party. Islam belongs to every Muslim. Pas has no right to say that Umno members are non-believers," he said.

He also said that the strength of Muslims would be reduced to half if women were not allowed to work and contribute towards the development of Muslims.

Dr Mahathir also repeated his statement criticising US Vice President Al-Gore who supported the street demonstrators to bring down the government chosen by Malaysians.

"Malaysia is our country and we will determine its fate. Others have no right," he said.

He also repeated his statement that any man who liked another man or any woman who liked another woman had no right to become a minister in Malaysia.

"I'm not talking about anyone in particular but only speaking in general," he said.

He said Malaysia wanted clean politics and a government that was clean, efficient and trustworthy.

-- BERNAMA

JM/MAN/MZM/jm AO