

Dr M: Action speaks louder than words

SUN 12 APR 2001

PAS should show sincerity in ending boycott of Umno members

By **Seema Viswanathan**
seema@thesundaily.com

SUBANG, Sat: Action speaks louder than words. This is what Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has to say about the call by PAS spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat to end the boycott of Umno members.

"Let's see the action. Sometimes it says Umno and PAS cannot be friends ... it says Umno and PAS members cannot be buried together, cannot marry.

"We've never stopped our people from meeting PAS members. They are the ones who are not happy about it," Mahathir said on his return from the United Arab Emirates today.

Nik Abdul Aziz said last night the boycott of Umno members will not be beneficial to the PAS, adding that it is not in line with the teachings of Islam.

The prime minister also said there is nothing he can do about the involvement of his son, Mokhzani, in the corporate world.

"I don't know anything about my children's business. That's their affairs. What can I do?"

"I stopped my children from having anything to do with the government, but if they want to do business with

the private sector, how can I stop them?"

Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir, the chief executive officer of Pantai Holdings Bhd and Tongkah Holdings Bhd, announced his withdrawal from the corporate world on Thursday because of accusations in

parliament of government contracts being awarded to him.

Mahathir said: "Sometimes when they are involved in takeovers, the company they are taking over may have companies involved with the government a little. That can-

not be avoided."

On the accusations, he said: "Even if I take my son and throw him in the sea, they will not like it. Those who want to accuse will accuse."

Mahathir also commented on the recent floods in the Klang Valley, saying that the design of the city is not good enough.

"But it's too late to do anything, unless we are willing to spend a lot and tackle the squatter problem.

"The Opposition will criticise everything and this will be a problem. We want to resolve this but some people want to politicise it," he said.

On a suggestion by Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu that those who throw garbage into drains be jailed, Mahathir said: "If we jail them, then people will say we are not considerate ..."

He described his two-day visit to the UAE as "good", adding that the city of Dubai offers many business opportunities.

"It's not just a city. It has commerce and industry and is highly-developed, and the people are involved in information technology," he said.

To take advantage of these opportunities, he said, Malaysia needs to make specific plans to increase its involvement in Dubai, including increasing the exchange of information between the two countries.