

'PAS defying ceramah ban to gain support'

SUN - 4 AUG 2001

KUALA LUMPUR, 4: PAS is defying the ceramah ban to gain support and political mileage, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Once they defy the ban, they will be arrested and later claim that there is no democracy in the country," Mahathir told reporters after presenting the excellence service awards at the Finance Ministry.

"It is alright if it is only a campaign. However, they are inculcating hatred towards the government by saying that the government is unIslamic," he said.

"There is freedom of speech but there is also a limit. We do not want freedom of speech that can result in the country being unstable due to excessive political activities.

"We have no problem if it is conducted in a house. However, PAS is organising it in the streets," he said.

As a result, many people

cannot concentrate on their work or studies as it was conducted in the mosques and universities.

Mahathir also said in other countries, campaigns ceased after the elections but PAS continued with its campaign until the next general election.

While the government is willing to separate politics from studies, PAS, however, is going into the universities and even kindergartens to conduct campaigns that bring about adverse effects to the nation's development.

The authorities have frozen the issuance of permits for all political ceramah nationwide since early last month in a bid to check on activities that may undermine national security.

PAS deputy president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, had said PAS will proceed with its ceramah programmes nationwide and is prepared to face the risk of legal action.