

PM: We're a govt of substance, not form

By SA'ODAH ELIAS **STAR**

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Government will be committing gross injustice if it were to implement an Islamic administration that is more focused on form rather than substance such as by introducing *hudud* laws in the country, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said the Government would continue to defend the concept already implemented, as that was the best for the country under the present circumstances.

"Our conscience is clear and we will continue with this concept no matter how much we are attacked and pressured by some quarters, including the use of violence," he said when launching a digital Quran called Al-Mursyid at the Islamic Museum.

He said the misinterpretation of Islam that put too much emphasis on form and procedure rather than substance was the cause of the split among the Malays in the country and the cause of instability in many other Muslim countries.

He said what PAS and some quarters tried to do was to "hijack" Islam to be used as a political tool to unseat a government it claimed was unIslamic.

This, he said, was a phenomenon faced not only by Malaysia but also by many other Muslim countries.

"Unless we go back to the basic teachings of Islam which propagate fairness, justice and peace, and address the problem of misinterpretation of the Quran, Muslim countries will always remain backward, undeveloped and the people angry at the world at large.

"This anger is what makes some Muslims act in a way that is not rational. They take out their anger and frustration on innocent people like in the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York," he said.

Speaking to reporters later, Dr Mahathir said the concept of Islamic administration implemented by the Government was not acceptable to some quarters because they wanted it to be more in the form of administration introduced by the Taliban.