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`Defiance by Pas shows disrespect'

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TUMPAT, Fri. - The defiance of the ban on political ceramah by the Pas Governments in Kelantan and Terengganu shows the party's disrespect for the law, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said if Governments cannot respect the law, no one else would respect law and order.

"We will face anarchy," he told reporters after a meeting with the rakyat at the residence of Zainul Hashim, a businessman in Pengkalan Kubur. He was asked to comment on the continued defiance by Pas in Kelantan and Terengganu which continued to hold ceramah despite the police ban on all political ceramah, including those organised by the Barisan Nasional.

"The Government should uphold and respect the law, otherwise the rakyat will face a big problem," he added.

The police froze the issuance of permits for all political ceramah nationwide from early this month in order to curb activities which may undermine national security.

Asked what he thought of Tumpat after taking a one-hour bus tour in the area, he said there was no development. He said except for some Federal Government premises such as the post office, the other buildings, including houses in the area, were more than 50 years old.

"The people have been left out although many of the children born here have entered universities and have become successful in life, but they did not return to help develop this place.

"Maybe they feel more comfortable in big cities. I am sad ... Kelantan and its people deserve better than this. Kelantan should be more developed than other States.

"When the Government is not efficient, the people will suffer," he added. Earlier when addressing a large crowd, Dr Mahathir said after 43 years of independence, Kelantan should be more developed but the situation was as if the State had still to achieve independence.

He said there were many successful Kelantanese working as businessmen and holding positions in big companies, as well in the Government, who contributed to the country's development.

"But they are in Kuala Lumpur, Johor and other big cities but not in Kelantan. Their presence here could help bring development to the State.

"Why is this happening? Why don't they return to their home State and contribute to its development? We want to know why they don't want to return."

Dr Mahathir believed that if the "environment" was conducive and the State Government was efficient, they would return and help develop the State. He said the people should therefore choose a capable Government which can work closely with the Federal Government and not one which liked to hurl abuses.

"It will be difficult for the Federal Government to help. How do you help someone who calls you dajal (evil) and anjing (dog) ... Dajal don't help people.

"I don't understand why they should utter words that hurt my feelings. Who likes to be called dajal and anjing? I will not call them any names ... I will let God decide," he said.