

# Govt may close PAS kindergartens

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PETALING JAYA: The Government may close down all PAS-sponsored kindergartens to prevent them from further spreading politics among young children.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said all the relevant authorities would be asked to look into existing legislations to see if the kindergartens have run foul of any law.

"We will look into the laws and if necessary we will introduce a new one. In the meantime we will look closely at their activities to see if they have breached any law," he said after launching the Puteri Umno community centre in Taman Manja yesterday.

He said it was now difficult

for the Government to act against the kindergartens because they were not subject to monitoring by any authority and there was no specific Act to stop kindergartens from including politically-spiced subjects in their establishments.

Dr Mahathir said all the reports received by the Government came from parents who had complained about the teaching methods in the kindergartens and subjects taught by the teachers.

"What we know is that teachers in most of these kindergartens do not restrict their teachings to religious matters but also include politics like teaching their young charges to hate the Government and certain leaders.

"Many parents, including

many government supporters, have been tricked into sending their children to these kindergartens because they wanted their children to learn about the religion early but only later did they realise that their children were being taught politics and hatred," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the problem was not only confined to the PAS-led states of Kelantan and Terengganu, but was quite widespread nationwide.

Earlier in his speech, he said parents who taught their children to hate something or someone from young were cruel as they would be leaving a legacy of hatred and anger in their children.

Children, he said, who did not know any better would be easily influenced by their par-

ents and teachers and those who had been taught to hate from young would grow up into angry adults.

"This is a great waste because instead of concentrating on doing well in life, they will be devoting their lives to hating other people and the Government."

Dr Mahathir also commended Puteri Umno for taking the initiative in setting up the community centre which offered services ranging from library to tuition classes for the local children.

Puteri Umno pro tern chairman Azalina Othman Said said more such centres would be set up in future if the response was good.

"Our target is to set up at least one community centre in every area nationwide."