

PAS: Dr M should not be overly sensitive

By FARID JAMALUDIN **STAR** 11 MAR 2002

KUALA LUMPUR: PAS said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad should not be "overly sensitive" about Umno being allegedly labelled "Jews and communists".

PAS information chief Azizan Abdul Razak said Barisan Nasional leaders had previously given labels to make PAS look worse than communists.

"Even the Prime Minister himself compared communism to PAS long before other leaders in his party made such accusations. The name-calling culture has been in existence for a very long time now in Barisan," he said.

The sour relations between the two parties, which once agreed to have unity talks to patch up their differences, took a new turn when PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor was alleged to have likened Umno to Jews and communists during a *ceramah* at Kempas, Johor, last week.

Several Umno leaders have since criticised Fadzil and his party for the alleged malicious remarks and on Saturday Dr Mahathir also said the accusations were an "act of traitors" and similar to accusations made by PAS that some Muslims were apostates.

Azizan said the malicious remarks which Umno alleged PAS had made had been used by Umno against PAS previously.

He said even Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik had labelled PAS worse than communists.

"We complained that the Bari-

san component party leader was playing with fire but there was no response from the authority.

"Lim called PAS a communist party but got away with it," Azizan said.

He added that the "double standard" must not be used as a political tool to discredit PAS.

"This is childish. Umno can do everything to PAS and get away with it but PAS will have to be punished for doing it to Umno," he said.

Regarding the alleged remarks by Fadzil, Azizan said the PAS president was explaining his perception that Umno had taken an anti-ulama approach and that there were two other groups in the world who are also known to be taking this stand. They are the Jews and the communists, he said.

Azizan said Umno's reaction to Fadzil's observation was akin to the Malay proverb, *siapa makan cili dia rasa pedas* (he who takes the chillies will taste how hot it is).

PAS central committee member Dr Hatta Ramli said Umno had used the acronym PAS to label the party as *Parti Ajaran Sesat* (the deviant party) and *Parti Ajaran Syaitan*, (party of satanic teachings); names which were worse than those that PAS had allegedly used on Umno.

He added that, however, PAS had not reacted to these insults because the people know that PAS was not that kind of party.

He called on Umno leaders to put a stop to their attacks and slander of PAS or face whiplash from their actions.