

Pas dares Dr M to hold snap election

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad should call for a general election now and allow Opposition parties to conduct *ceramah* to prove that Umno is confident of defeating the Opposition.

Pas Information chief Azizan Abdul Razak said today it was not fair for Dr Mahathir to boast of Umno's strength when Opposition parties were constrained in holding their activities.

"If it is true that you are strong, then give us a level playing field. Let us hold ~~ceramah to~~ explain ourselves to ~~the rakyat~~ and let them choose who they want to vote for," Azizan said.

He was responding to a statement yesterday by Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, that the

Opposition would suffer a crushing defeat in the next general election with Umno's and the Barisan Nasional's renewed strength.

Addressing the crowd at the 56th Umno anniversary celebrations in Shah Alam, Dr Mahathir gave a message to the Opposition that "the person and issue" they had exploited was "no longer an issue in this country".

Azizan said there were many unresolved issues which Pas could highlight such as the Programmes for the Hardcore Poor (PPRT) and Tabung Haji scandals as well as scandals of Umno leaders.

Parti Keadilan Nasional secretary-general Sahri Bahri challenged Dr Mahathir to dissolve Parliament and call for snap polls to let the people decide the truth to his claim

of Umno's strength and that "the person and issue is no longer an issue".

In Kuala Terengganu, Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat claimed today the people gave their support to Umno as they received monetary gifts from the party.

Such support is not sincere and will not last, in contrast to the people's support for Pas.

"In Kelantan, people support Pas sincerely and not because of money or other reasons. Any support derived through giving money will not last long."

Nik Aziz was speaking to reporters after attending the seminar on Syariah Criminal Bill, organised by the State Government in Wisma Darul Iman.