

Pas 'muktamar' expected to target writers

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KOTA BARU, Tues. — Resolutions urging action to be taken against writers and individuals who insult Islam are expected to be passed at the upcoming Pas *muktamar*.

Several Pas divisions, including Kuala Lumpur, have submitted resolutions calling on the authorities to act against these people.

Party secretary-general Nasharuddin Mat Isa said today delegates are expected to raise the issue at the three-day *muktamar*.

The National Islamic Affairs Committee chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has yet to decide on whether to ask those accused of insulting Islam by the Association of Islamic Scholars of Malaysia (PUM) to explain.

PUM had submitted a memo-

randum to the Council of Rulers on Feb 4, urging action against individuals and writers who it believed had insulted Islam, the Prophet, the Quran and the *ulama*.

Those named were *New Straits Times* columnist Farish A. Noor, Malay intellectual Kassim Ahmad, *The Sun* columnist Akbar Ali, Universiti Malaya lecturer Patricia Martinez, lawyer Malik Imtiaz Sarwar and Sisters in Islam executive director Zainah Anwar and her group.

The memorandum caused a heated debate among scholars, NGOs, Islamic authorities and politicians.

Last month, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said while the committee acknowledged the need to look into PUM's allegations, there is also the

need to look into statements made by other people, including Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, which could also be deemed as insulting Islam.

These include the Menteri Besar's controversial statement that Allah too uttered profanities.

Pas president Datuk Fadzil Mohd Noor is scheduled to open the *muktamar* at the Pusat Tarbiyah Islamiah Kelantan (Putik) in Pengakalan Chepa on Friday morning.

Nik Abdul Aziz will open the Dewan Syura Ulama assembly at Hotel Perdana on Thursday.

The Dewan Pemuda (youth) assembly on Thursday will be opened by party deputy president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang while the Dewan Muslimat assembly at New Pacific Hotel will be opened by vice-president Mustaffa Ali.