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PM: BN set to retake Terengganu

Manan Osman; Sajahan Waheed

KUALA TERENGGANU, Fri. - Barisan Nasional stands a good chance of wresting Terengganu from Pas as it now has very strong support from the people, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Prime Minister and Umno president said there was a clear indication of the swing in the people's mood compared with the previous general election.

"We did not enjoy this kind of crowd or support then," he said, referring to the huge crowd of BN supporters and villagers who turned up at the Sekolah Menengah Tun Telanai in Marang near here today.

About 20,000 people gathered on the school padang where Dr Mahathir addressed them in conjunction with the Terengganu Barisan Nasional convention, his first political function since Pas took over the State in the last general election.

Dr Mahathir told the people Pas had resorted to lies and deceit to win elections, and not through democratic means. He said Pas leaders did not feel any remorse about making use of religion to spread lies and instil hatred in the people against the Barisan Nasional.

"It is our duty as Muslims to reject Pas completely because it is not an Islamic party and if we vote for the party, it will not guarantee us the passage to heaven or make us better Muslims.

"On the other hand, if we support the party, we too will be sinning."

He said that if Muslims read the Quran or other religious books (kitab), not a single one had stated that God uttered profanities or had the traits of a gangster. He said there are 1.3 billion Muslims in the world including the Arabs who are mostly Muslims, but they are not Pas members.

"Does this mean that they would all go to hell?" he asked in reference to Pas' claim that those who do not support the party would go to hell.

Asked about Persatuan Ulama Malaysia's support for Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat over his statement that God was a "gangster", Dr Mahathir said: "I do not acknowledge PUM as an ulama association.

"I do not know what their qualifications are to claim themselves as ulama. I agree that PUM's statement could influence the people but again when the people are already influenced by Pas, they would simply agree with whatever is said by their leaders."