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Understand Quran before preaching to others, Dr M tells Pas leaders

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ALOR STAR, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Pas leaders should themselves read and understand the Quran thoroughly before preaching to others.

He said cursing and swearing were never a part of Islamic teaching, but yet it was common to hear Pas leaders doing it openly at their ceramah.

Dr Mahathir made these remarks at two separate functions in Pendang and Anak Bukit.

"Even Pas leaders, like its spiritual adviser Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat and acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, should read and understand the Quran before preaching to others.

"This is why we can never accept Pas' version of hudud. It is their version of hudud and nothing to do with Islam," he said when opening the Kedah Farmers, Livestock Breeders and Fishermens' Day at the Pendang Recreational Park today.

Dr Mahathir said if hudud tabled by the Terengganu Pas Government were the laws of Allah as claimed by Hadi, then it was impossible for these laws to be changed all of a sudden.

"Did Allah suddenly change the laws after being pressured by Women and Family Development Minister Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil and others who were against the Terengganu Government laws?" asked the Prime Minister, adding that there was only one set of hudud and these laws could never be changed.

He said Malaysia was a multi-racial country and Islam never taught anyone to treat others unfairly.

"That is why we treat everyone the same here. The world is not filled only with Muslims. There are so many races, all created by God. We never want to make anyone feel uneasy here and we have done so well that foreigners often come to Malaysia to learn how a multi-racial society has lived in harmony for so many years and seen such vast development.

"Look at what Pas has done for Terengganu and Kelantan. There has been no progress at all. I call upon the people to reject Pas and its teachings outright and together bring Pas down."

At another function in Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Baru in Anak Bukit, Dr Mahathir criticised those who had enjoyed the development brought about by the Government but were ungrateful for it.

He said many had become successful with help from the Government, but Pas had taught them not to be thankful but to hate the Government instead.

"Pas claims there is no need for anyone to be thankful as it is the responsibility of the Government to provide for the people."

He said all Pas did was to go around making empty promises, including that a vote for Pas would guarantee them a place in heaven where they can meet their former leader, the late Pas president Datuk Fadzil Noor.

Dr Mahathir said he accepted that some may not support Umno, but this should not give them the licence to hurl abuse at others.

He pointed out that the poverty rate in the country was now only about seven per cent compared with 80 per cent 44 years ago. Programmes, including the Hardcore Poor Development Programme, had worked well and it was the Government's aim to continue with these programmes. He said the Barisan Nasional Government never neglected the poor and was always looking into more ways to assist them.