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Mahathir-Poster

MAHATHIR SLAMS PAS OVER "SLANDEROUS" POSTERS

ALOR SETAR, July 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today hit out at PAS for allegedly coming out with posters slandering him and other Umno leaders.

Slander is disallowed in Islam, the prime minister said at a media conference after presenting cash aid under the Bernas Education Fund at SK Sungai Baru here.

He said this when asked to comment on posters allegedly distributed by the opposition party during the ongoing campaign for the Pendang parliamentary and Anak Bukit state by-elections.

Dr Mahathir described as "slander" a poster that reads "Mahathir the High Priest of the Church" and which is widely distributed in the two areas.

The poster shows Dr Mahathir wearing robes like that of a priest and a chain with a cross, with the smaller heading reading: "The Big Secret Behind the Meeting With the Pope in Rome and That Holiday in Italy."

Another poster shows Dr Mahathir and his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi sitting cross-legged in a cemetery, wearing just a cloth around their waist and a songkok.

The poster's heading reads "Mahathir Senile, Pak Lah Idling" and the sub-heading reads "One Wants To Be God, the Other Aspires To Be the Prophet....Haparak! (Hopeless!)"

There is also a poster depicting Abdullah about to slaughter a pig with the headings: "Pig Seller Not Qualified To Become PM" and "Mahathir Made a Wrong Choice of Successor".

A poster with the picture of Puteri Umno pro tem head Azalina Othman Said wearing a chain with a big cross, reads: "Azalina is Christian" and "Jews Sponsoring and Paying Puteri Umno".

Dr Mahathir shook his head in disagreement as he saw the posters at the news conference.

Replying to another question, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional had a good chance of winning both by-elections and it should work even harder to increase the majority.

He said the BN did not use rough tactics in their campaigns unlike PAS.

"PAS people had gone to other people's houses and seized identity cards of voters," claimed the prime minister.

"They don't have that right. It's the police who have the right to see people's identity cards," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the police have given him an assurance that they would continue to maintain peace and security.

The prime minister also commented on Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat's statement that PAS members only resorted to insulting Umno leaders because their advice was ignored by the leaders.

"If the advice is good, we accept it. But the (PAS) advice isn't good. We tell them not to confuse Muslims but they ignore," he said.

Asked why he was "coming to the ground" this time whereas he seldom did so in previous by-elections, Dr Mahathir said he was only officiating at events in the two areas and it was a coincidence that the by-elections were taking place.

"I did not come to campaign. Besides, these are my areas in Kedah. If I go to Pendang and not go to Anak Bukit, then people will be upset," he said.

Pointed out that his speeches at the two places sounded like he was campaigning, Dr Mahathir said PAS leaders too were campaigning.

-- BERNAMA

JM SK