

25 FEB 2002

Muhammad-PAS

PEOPLE SUSPICIOUS OVER PAS' PRO-MILITANT APPROACH, SAYS MAT TAIB

KOTA BAHARU, Feb 25 (Bernama) -- The people are increasingly suspicious of the opposition's approach, especially PAS'inclination towards militancy, Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Muhamad Taib said today.

He said the masses could read the thinking of opposition leaders who encouraged violence through their teachings, ceramahs and courses to produce militant groups.

"...Now, we see the people having a new stand, a very encouraging stand after seeing the liberal policies adopted by the BN government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"They can see the propagation of Islam by BN is being done in a more comprehensive manner as compared to what the PAS leaders are doing," he told reporters after a closed-door meeting with Kelantan Umno liaison committee headed by Datuk Mustapa Mohamed.

Muhammad said the people, particularly at the grassroots, have begun to look at PAS as a party incapable of forming an Islamic government as its credibility had been destroyed with more of its members being involved in militant activities.

Muhammad said the militant groups in Malaysia could be linked to PAS leaders as the opposition party was responsible for infusing the militant culture to the extent that many of their party members and children went to Afghanistan to fight the war there.

"Upon their return to Malaysia, they promote violent actions by setting up Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia, Al-Ma'unah and many other groups which the government managed to trace originating from PAS," he said.

As such, the people could see that PAS was not the party that could bring peace to the country, he said.

He urged the people not to be taken in by PAS's tactics.

Asked on BN's chances to wrest Kelantan from PAS in the next general election, Muhammad said: "We don't know whether the Kelantan people are prepared to change the government although we really want it to happen. What's important is that there is change among the people in the state."

He said Umno wants to see Kelantan under BN administration so that various programmes to develop the people could be implemented.

-- BERNAMA

BD TS