

Dr M: Stop raising Islamic state issue

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M'sia already known as Islamic country

LANGKAWI: PAS should stop raising the issue on the setting up of an Islamic state as part of its political agenda as the Government has successfully promoted Malaysia as an Islamic country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"Malaysia has not only been recognised as an Islamic country but also as a model of a successful Islamic state," he told reporters after chairing the Cabinet meeting at the Gunung Raya retreat here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said PAS was not sincere about forming an Islamic state but had instead abused Islam to gain the people's support.

He said PAS was not even an Islamic party because its leaders often cursed other people and made slanderous statements, and used "dirty

words" on their opponents.

He was commenting on the statement by PAS vice-president, Datuk Mustafa Ali that an Islamic state was not an objective in the party's constitution.

Mustafa, who said this in an interview on the British Broadcasting Corporation programme *Hardtalk* recently, also claimed the media had used the term "Islamic state" to frighten the non-Muslims.

Dr Mahathir said political parties in other Muslim countries did not use Islamic names for their parties because they did not want to tarnish the image of Islam.

He said PAS was a very irresponsible party for abusing Islam for their political mileage.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi when met

after the meeting said the interview with Mustafa proved that PAS leaders were not consistent in their stand over the party's policies and their statements were often in contradiction.

He said Mustafa had in the interview claimed that it was the media which used the term "Islamic state", whereas the party's President Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang had repeatedly said that PAS would continue its struggle to set up an Islamic state.

He said Mustafa also mentioned that PAS had no intentions to amend the Federal Constitution if the party won the general election but Hadi had said that *Hudud* laws would be implemented in the country if PAS ruled the country and this would only be possible if the Federal Constitution was amended.