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Dr M: Pas using religion to get votes

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ALOR STAR, Sat. - Pas' allegation that the rape and murder of Nurul Huda Gani was God's punishment for Umno's rejection of the Opposition party's proposed criminal laws, went to show the extent of Pas' manipulation of religion for political gain.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was saddened by such an allegation and urged the State Barisan Nasional campaign machinery to expose the Opposition party on the issue when campaigning.

Dr Mahathir also turned the tables on the Opposition party by saying that if Pas could allege that Nurul Huda's rape and murder was divine punishment, then, conversely, it could also be said that all calamities in the two Pas-administered States of Kelantan and Terengganu - such as incest cases and heavy flooding - were also God's punishment to the Opposition party for twisting Islam for political gain.

"BN supporters must explain this to the rakyat and challenge (Pas); is it true that Nurul Huda's rape was because Umno did not agree with Pas' criminal laws?

"We want to know why heavy flooding occurs in Kelantan. Is it because Pas has tried to twist Allah's religion, to twist God's laws by submitting Pas criminal laws, which can be amended by Pas?

"(True) hudud cannot be amended by man. It is God's laws. Therefore, all the calamities which occur in Kelantan and Terengganu, like incest cases and the like, are because Pas administration is lousy," he said when launching the Barisan Nasional election machinery at the Stadium Sultan Abdul Halim indoor stadium here today.

Dr Mahathir is State BN election adviser.

Dr Mahathir said Pas' administration in the State was so bad it could not even provide enough jobs for its people, causing many to migrate to other States in search of employment.

Dr Mahathir said the State BN election machinery should not be afraid of Pas' allegation which "had no basis whatsoever".

"I am very saddened by the actions of Pas. They alleged that Nurul Huda's rape and murder was because her father was an Umno branch head, with Umno being a party that rejected Pas' hudud. Because of that, God caused Nurul Huda to be raped and murdered.

"Ladies and gentlemen, God is not as cruel as Pas thinks, but we know that for Pas, God is a gangster... that is Pas' God. Maybe Pas' God is like that, but Umno's God is not like that.

"I don't know what God they (Pas) prays to, a gangster God, according to them, a God that likes to use foul language... that is Pas' God, and the laws which they claim to be hudud are no more than Pas criminal laws."

Dr Mahathir said Umno did not accept Pas' so-called hudud because it was nothing more than the Opposition party's interpretation of criminal laws dressed up as Islamic law.

"But for Pas, every thing is a political issue which can be capitalised upon, be they issues about someone's death or torture. All are political issues to fish for votes.

"This is how Pas operates. If they can, they themselves will rape all the children of Umno members, to show how God does not like Umno, but they are actually the ones who are committing sin if they think that the rape of a 10-year-old child happened because of a rejection of Pas criminal laws."

Dr Mahathir also reserved some choice words for the DAP's Lim Kit Siang, Pas spiritual adviser Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat and Pas information chief Datuk Dr Harun Din.

On Lim, Dr Mahathir said while he stood by his promise not to stand as an election candidate after retiring, Lim still had plans to contest even after retiring.

"The DAP no longer has plans to wrest Penang. There is no 'Third Penang Plan', because they know they cannot win. Karpal Singh lost, Kit Siang also lost (in the 1999 general election).

"Kit Siang also said he was going to retire, but now he wants to contest again. When I said I wanted to retire, I no longer have any plans to contest."

On Nik Aziz, Dr Mahathir said that the Kelantan Menteri Besar's participation in the recent Chinese New Year celebration was a sham, because Pas had for years insisted that Muslims should not co-operate with non-Muslims.

On Harun, Dr Mahathir said the Pas information chief was a "coward" who promised to run against him if he were to be fielded in the coming election, but failed to deliver on a similar pledge in the 1999 polls.

"Harun said if I contest, then he wants to contest. But he is a penakut (coward), bacoi (bacul means timid and listless), because only when he knows that I am not contesting does he issue his challenge to me this time around.

"Why didn't he go against me then (in the 1999 general election)?" Dr Mahathir also described Harun as a "cheat" who offered "charmed water" (air jampi) which could supposedly heal ailments, while going to hospital when he himself got ill.

"He used to cheat people by selling ayaq jampi.

"Supposedly, drinking his ayaq jampi can cure one of ailments, but when he himself suffered a heart attack, he ran to Australia.

"Instead of drinking his own ayaq jampi, he asked the Australians to operate. Howard (John Howard) is Harun's idol. That is why he went to Australia."

The former Prime Minister said that unlike Harun, he sought treatment locally when he himself suffered a heart ailment, because he was confident in the abilities of the local doctors.

"We have the medical expertise to operate, it's not that we don't have them, and to operate is not so difficult. Even if one needs to be operated on with an axe, then we also have axes.

"Harun is a trickster, a trickster who is very vocal when violating religion for political interest and to get votes."