

# Furore in Perkim after Dr M's election as chief

**PENANG:** A controversy has erupted in the Muslim Welfare Organisation of Malaysia (Perkim) following the election of former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as president and the termination of several key office bearers.

It is believed that among those whose memberships were terminated are Perkim secretary-general Mohamed Shaifudin Mohamed Ariff, vice-president Datuk Noor Mohamad Backer Abu Backer, national Wanita chief Datuk Amar Laila Taib, who is the wife of former Perkim president Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmood, and Negeri Sembilan chairman Datuk Siti Rahman Kassim.

Some of the members were also surprised that Dr Mahathir

had taken over the presidency of Perkim as he had earlier declined to take up the post after defeating Perkim president Abdul Taib in an election held during the annual general meeting in January.

It is learnt that Dr Mahathir had written a letter to the national council stating that he was not interested to take up the post because he had only won by a slim majority, and that there were members who did not support him.

Perkim members in Penang also said that they were not invited to the breaking fast ceremony held by Perkim at the Perdana Leadership Foundation at Putrajaya recently.

Noor Mohamad, who was also the Penang Perkim chair-

man, said that he would not be stepping down because his termination letter was issued by the disciplinary committee which had no authority to terminate membership.

"According to the constitution, termination of membership can only be decided by the national council committee.

"Therefore, as far as I am concerned, I am still the state chairman," he said, adding that he received the letter of termination of membership on June 12.

Noor Mohamad said this after presenting *zakat* amounting to RM60,000 to 600 needy people.

Perkim contributed RM40,000, while the balance was from individual donors.