'PAS NOT FOLLOWING TEACHINGS OF RELIGION'

Many of the party's acts go against its ideology, besides making outrageous claims, says Dr M

AMALINA KAMAL
AND AZANIS SHAHILA AMAN
PUTRAJAYA
news@nst.com.my

TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad has taken a dig at Pas, saying that the so-called "Islamic party" does not actually conform to the true teachings of the religion.

Dr Mahathir said many things that the party did were against the ideology it upholds, besides issuing outrageous claims masked as Islamic teachings.

"For example, the party claims that corruption is permitted in Islam and that is not true," he said.

"In fact, many other things like condemning some people as not being Muslim enough is also wrong. You cannot just condemn people unless there is clear evidence that the accused has rejected his or her belief," he added.

On the popularity of Pas based on their performance in the last election and how the party would fare in the coming six state elections, Dr Mahathir said Pas had leveraged Perikatan Nasional (PN) well.

"Pas will certainly benefit from being associated with PN because the coalition appears to have a lot of money."

That said, Dr Mahathir hinted that the "green wave" that happened across northern states was a result of poor governance by the previous administration.

"Kedah was an Umno stronghold, but they didn't provide good governance. Hence, the people's rejection of Umno," he said.

"During the previous administrations, their concerns were not about the people, but more about how to make money for themselves and their family.

"For Malays, the only other party they ended up with is Pas. So, from being good supporters of Umno, they switched over to Pas because Umno did not deliver on their promises," he said in an interview with the *New Straits Times*.

Dr Mahathir shared this was a lesson for the government to listen to the people and try to fulfil their expectations.

"If you do that, then the people will support you. But if you don't do that, then the people will want to find some other party to support," he said.

The former prime minister also provided his thoughts on whether Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has what it takes to tackle Pas as a political power.

"Anwar is very strong on multi-racialism, but the people (still) do not believe in it truly," said Dr Mahathir.

"At the constituency level, if voters are predominantly of Chinese origin, a Malay cannot contest there, because there is a lack of racial affinity. While politicians and intellectuals talk about multi-racialism, on the ground it is not happening," he said.

He shared that beyond racial difference, contrast in terms of economic well-being is also something to take note.

"Between the rich and the poor, even if it is single ethnic, there will be confrontation. However, when the rich belong to one race, and the poor belong to another race, the confrontation is greater.

"If we want to reduce this, we have to ensure that all races have gotten a fair share of the wealth of this country. If not, there will always be tension, there will always be confrontation, and at times, there may be violence."