

KUALA LUMPUR, 14 NOV. (BERNAMA)---DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS DIRECTED UMNO LEADERS TO GO DOWN TO THE PEOPLE AND +EXPLAIN THE TRUTH+ ABOUT THE PAS LABELLING OF UMNO MEMBERS AS KAFIR (INFIDELS).

SOURCES SAID THE PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT ISSUED THE DIRECTIVE IN A SPECIAL MEETING WITH THE PARTY'S MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, POLITICAL SECRETARIES, STATE UMNO EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES AND PARTY HEADQUARTERS OFFICIALS AT UMNO HOUSE LAST NIGHT.

THE MEETING WAS SPECIALLY CALLED FOLLOWING THE ABORTED NOV. 11 UMNO-PAS DEBATE WHICH HAD TO BE CALLED OFF ON THE ADVICE OF THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE RULERS,

THE SOURCES SAID THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD UMNO LEADERS TO ORGANIZE MORE MEET-THE-PEOPLE SESSIONS TO MAKE CLEAR UMNO'S STAND ON THE +MENGGAFIR+ ISSUE

THIS WAS IN VIEW OF PAS' CONTINUED CALLING OF UMNO MEMBERS AS KAFIR AND ALLEGATIONS OF UMNO BEING SCARED TO FACE PAS IN THE DEBATE.

ACCORDING TO THE SOURCES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD THE MEETING THAT IT WAS TIME UMNO TAKE AN OFFENSIVE STAND AGAINST PAS TO COUNTER THE OPPOSITION PARTY'S CURRENT ONSLAUGHT.

THE SOURCES QUOTED THE PRIME MINISTER AS SAYING THAT UMNO HAD BEEN TOO GENTLEMANLY AND TOO DEFENSIVE AGAINST PAS AND THIS WAS READ BY PAS AS WEAKNESS ON UMNO'S PART.

IN LINE WITH THE ALL OUT MEET-THE-PEOPLE MOVE, THE UMNO INFORMATION BUREAU HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO UNDERTAKE ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS ESPECIALLY IN THE TALKS AT VILLAGE LEVELS.

+IF PAS HAS ITS PASUKAN GERAK GEMPUR (ASSAULT UNIT) TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST UMNO, WE ARE PREPARED TO COUNTER THE ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST US,\* AN UMNO SOURCE SAID.

THE MEETING ALSO DISCUSSED OTHER CONTEMPORARY ISSUES INCLUDING THE WHITE PAPER ON RELIGIOUS EXTREMISTS.--BERNAMA

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