

04 JUL 1999

Mahathir-Lie

NIK AZIZ'S ALLEGATION AGAINST UMNO IS A LIE, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 4 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has described as a lie Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat's claim that Umno has shown characteristics of infidels.

The Prime Minister said as the PAS Council of Ulama chief Nik Aziz was free to criticise the national leadership, but he questioned the PAS leader's action to hurl such allegations against Umno.

"He is slandering again, calling people infidels and all that," Dr Mahathir was reported as saying over private station TV3's Buletin Utama tonight.

Dr Mahathir was interviewed by TV3 while making a private visit to the One Utama shopping centre in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, near here, today.

He said this when asked to comment Nik Aziz's allegation at a political ceramah in Kelantan two days ago that Umno had shown elements of infidels by rejecting Islam in national administration.

Nik Aziz made the allegation in response to claims by Umno leaders that PAS supporters' practices resembled those of the Shi'ite and Khawarij.

He accused Umno of having characteristics of infidels for allegedly rejecting the Quran and Hadis and using other rules as the country's laws.

PAS also used the infidel issue against Umno to fish for votes in the 80s, but its leaders recently said that those who made the allegation against Umno were no longer in the party, and that the issue should not be revived.

-- BERNAMA

ROZ ZKS YBY