

17 DEC 2000

Abdullah-Accusations

UMNO LEADERS DIRECTED TO COUNTER OPPOSITION'S ACCUSATIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Deputy Umno president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today directed Umno leaders at all levels to counter the lies spread by the opposition about the party and its leadership.

"We must go down to the field to explain because they have concocted stories which attack (Umno president Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir Mohamad personally.

"These surely make Umno members uneasy and cause them to question and to demand for correct information," the deputy prime minister said when asked about the opposition's actions in constantly hurling accusations against Dr Mahathir.

Abdullah was met by reporters after opening the Sixth World federation of Foo Chow Associations Convention, here.

The one-day convention was attended by representatives from 46 Foochow associations worldwide and delegations from 22 countries including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the European dan Asean countries.

Abdullah said the opposition's actions were aimed solely at destroying the party and Malay unity.

He said the Umno leadership would not allow any of its leaders to be discredited for the narrow political interests of the opposition.

"The approach adopted by the opposition in condemning or hitting Dr Mahathir is only an act to destroy Umno.

"They (opposition) feel that if the head is hit, the body will weaken and die. If that's their assumption, they're in for a disappointment," he said.

Asked about criticisms by Umno's own members against its leaders, Abdullah said the criticisms must be made at the right forum and in the spirit of consensus for the good of the party.

-- BERNAMA

APG ES JK