

16 APR 2001

Mahathir-Hadi

UMNO REGRETS HADI'S REFUSAL TO RETRACT SO-CALLED "HAJI HADI'S MESSAGE"

KUALA LUMPUR, April 16 (Bernama) -- Umno today expressed regret over PAS Deputy President Haji Abdul Hadi Awang's adamant stance not to retract his message so-called "Haji Hadi's Message" which labelled Umno members as infidels and is said to be cause for Malay disunity.

Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the stubborn attitude by Hadi, who is also Terengganu Menteri Besar, showed he did not respect the decision by the National Fatwa Council which felt that his message was against the teachings of Islam.

"We regret over the adamant attitude of Haji Hadi who still refused to accept the fatwa council's decision that his message was contrary to Islamic teachings," he told a media conference after the Umno supreme council meeting today.

"This showed that he (Haji Hadi) does not respect the council's decision," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno would study the form of action to be taken to ensure the council's decisions were respected by all Malaysians.

"Haji Hadi's Message" is the speech delivered by Hadi in a ceramah at Banggol Peradong in Terengganu in 1981, labelling Umno members as infidels and is said to be the cause of Malay disunity in the country.

On the proposed Malay unity talks between Umno and PAS, Dr Mahathir said Umno still wants to meet PAS but it would not accept any conditions before the talks.

He said Umno regretted that PAS regarded Malay unity as though it was something against Islam and that it considered Malays with extremely strong nationalistic feelings as racial chauvinists.

"We disagree with this opinion because we feel that what we are fighting for is something that is acceptable by all the races. In our country, we must defend the weak so that we can create a more balanced society.

"We respect the history of Malay states where the Malays willingly accepted other races as the citizens of this country on condition that they recognised the position of the Malays and we recognise the position of non-Malays," he said.

Umno had decided to discuss four topics at the proposed meeting with PAS. They are Malay special rights and privileges, the position of Islam as the official religion, Bahasa Malaysia as the official language and the status of the Malay Rulers as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

-- BERNAMA

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