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ALOR STAR, JAN. 1 (BERNAMA) -- DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD URGED THE MALAYS TODAY TO CONTINUE TO GIVE THEIR SUPPORT TO UMNO FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR FUTURE.

HE SAID THE CONTINUED BACKING OF THE MALAYS FOR UMNO WOULD STRENGTHEN THE PARTY AND ENABLE IT TO FUNCTION MORE EFFECTIVELY FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THEIR STANDARD OF LIVING AND ECONOMIC STATUS.

SINCE TAKING THE LEAD IN THE COUNTRY'S ADMINISTRATION, UMNO HAD SUCCEEDED IN HELPING THE MALAYS TO IMPROVE IN EDUCATION, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MATTERS WITHOUT JEOPARDISING THE POSITION OF THE OTHER RACES, HE SAID.

ALTHOUGH UMNO GAVE PRIORITY TO MALAY INTERESTS, IT ALSO FOUGHT FOR A BETTER WAY OF LIFE FOR THE OTHER RACES IN THE COUNTRY, HE ADDED WHEN LAUNCHING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE ALOR STAR UMNO DIVISION AT STADIUM DATUK SYED OMAR HERE.

DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS AN UMNO VICE-PRESIDENT, SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALLOCATED ABOUT \$600 MILLION UNDER THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN TO HELP THE MALAYS IN EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.

-- BERNAMA MORE 1902/ZCM

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OF THE AMOUNT, ABOUT \$200 MILLION WOULD BE FOR MARA TO ASSIST MALAYS IN EDUCATION.

THE BALANCE WOULD BE FOR MARA AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO INCREASE MALAY PARTICIPATION IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, INCLUDING \$200 MILLION FOR THE PURCHASE OF SHARES.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE ALLOCATION OF SUCH A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY PROVED THE SINCERITY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND UMNO TO HELP THE MALAYS ACHIEVE GREATER PROGRESS IN EVERY FIELD.

DR. MAHATHIR LATER PRESENTED PRIZES TO WINNERS OF VARIOUS COMPETITIONS ORGANISED BY THE DIVISION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CELEBRATIONS.

EARLIER, DR. MAHATHIR AND MENTERI BESAR DATUK SRI SYED AHMAD SHAHABUDDIN JOINED MORE THAN 500 UMNO MEMBERS IN A PROCESSION FROM THE UMNO BUILDING TO THE STADIUM. -- BERNAMA 1906/ZCM