

MAHATHIR - MERGER

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KUCHING, MARCH 26 (BERNAMA) -- DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED TODAY DESCRIBED AS +VERY GOOD+ THE PROPOSAL THAT THE THREE MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES IN SARAWAK MERGE INTO A SINGLE POLITICAL ORGANISATION.

+ANYTHING THAT BRINGS US CLOSER TOGETHER IS VERY GOOD AND THE PEOPLE WILL EVENTUALLY SEE IT AS BRINGING A LOT OF GOOD TO THEM AND THE COUNTRY,+ HE TOLD NEWSMEN HERE.

HE WAS ASKED FOR HIS COMMENT ON THE PROPOSAL BY SARAWAK CHIEF MINISTER DATUK PATINGGI HAJI ABDUL-RAHMAN YAKUB.

DATUK PATINGGI RAHMAN HAD PROPOSED A POSSIBLE MERGER OF HIS PARTY, THE PARTY PESAKA BUMIPUTRA BERSATU (PPB), THE SARAWAK NATIONAL PARTY (SNAP) AND THE SARAWAK UNITED PEOPLE'S PARTY (SUPP) WHICH ARE COMPONENT PARTNERS OF THE STATE BARISAN NASIONAL COALITION GOVERNMENT.

DATUK PATINGGI RAHMAN WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT SAID: +WE HAVE TO GIVE THE COMPONENT PARTIES SUFFICIENT TIME TO STUDY THE PROPOSAL AND WE DO NOT WISH THEM TO RUSH INTO IT.+ -- BERNAMA MORE 1802/ZCM

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TO A QUESTION ON THE MALAYSIAN TRADE UNION CONGRESS' (MTUC) PROPOSED POLITICAL PARTY, DR. MAHATHIR SAID: +OF COURSE THEY CAN DO THIS BUT THEY MUST ALSO REMEMBER THAT THE ISSUE OF INCREASING ONE'S INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS A NATIONAL ISSUE.+

HE FELT HOWEVER IT WAS A FALSE ASSUMPTION TO THINK THE PEOPLE WOULD ALWAYS SUPPORT A LABOUR PARTY. ANOTHER FACTOR THE MTUC HAD TO CONSIDER WAS THAT MANY OF THEIR MEMBERS WERE PAS AND UMNO MEMBERS WHO MIGHT NOT BE WILLING TO FORSAKE THE TWO PARTIES TO JOIN THE PROPOSED MTUC POLITICAL PARTY.

DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO EDUCATION MINISTER, SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT SOME PEOPLE MADE THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO TAKE OVER ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOLS INTO A POLITICAL ISSUE.

EARLIER HE MET THE BOARD OF MISSION SCHOOLS HERE AT A CLOSED-DOOR SESSION +TO SETTLE SOME MISGIVINGS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS ON ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES.+

DR. MAHATHIR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE DR. SITI HASMAH AND SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTER TAN SRI ONG KEE HUI WHO IS ALSO SUPP CHAIRMAN ON HIS BRIEF VISIT TO SARAWAK. -
BERNAMA 1870/ZCM