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MAHATHIR-UMNO
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KULIM, MAY 2 (BERNAMA)--- DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD STRESSED TODAY THAT UMNO'S STRENGTH DEPENDED ON MEMBERS' UNITY AND STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION.

HE SAID UMNO MEMBERS THEMSELVES SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE PARTY'S COFFERS.

UMNO WILL NOT RECEIVE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM GROUPS WHO WISH TO EXTENT INFLUENCE IN THE PARTY, + HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE PADANG SERAI UMNO DIVISION DELEGATES CONFERENCE HERE.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID UMNO WOULD BE ABLE TO COLLECT \$400,000 A MONTH IF ITS MEMBERS CONTRIBUTED ONE RINGGIT EACH.

+EVEN IF ONLY 300,000 MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE THAT SUM, UMNO CAN COLLECT \$3.6 MILLION A YEAR OR \$18 MILLION IN FIVE YEARS, + HE ADDED.

HE SAID WITH SUCH A LARGE SUM, UMNO WOULD NOT ONLY BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT A MORE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTION CAMPAIGN, BUT COULD EVEN SET UP ITS OWN COOPERATIVE.-- BERNAMA MORE 1610/IB

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AT PRESENT, MEMBERS PAID ONLY \$1 IN FEES EVERY YEAR OF WHICH 50 SEN WENT TO THE BRANCHES, 25 SEN TO DIVISIONS AND 25 SEN TO HEAD OFFICE.

AS MUCH, HEAD OFFICE COULD ONLY COLLECT ABOUT \$100,000 A YEAR WHILE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS SUCH AS OFFICERS' SALARIES AMOUNTED TO ABOUT \$1 MILLION A YEAR.

HE SAID UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, UMNO WAS FORCED TO SEEK DONATIONS TO SUBSIDISE THE DEFICIT.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID EACH MEMBER SHOULD STRIVE TO STRENGTHEN UNDERSTANDING AND UNITY WITHIN PARTY RANKS.

THIS WAS VITAL AS THE GOVERNMENT'S STRENGTH DEPENDED ON UMNO, HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA MORE 1615/IB

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LATER, OPENING EXTENSIONS COSTING \$180,000 AT THE JUNJUNG NATIONAL SCHOOL NEAR HERE, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE EDUCATION MINISTRY WAS STUDYING PLANS TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN THE COUNTRY.

THIS INCLUDED INCREASING THE NUMBER OF TRAINED TEACHERS AND REVIEWING THE SYLLABUS AS WELL AS PROVIDING FACILITIES SUCH AS MORE CLASS-ROOMS.

DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE EDUCATION MINISTER, SAID AT PRESENT 75 PER CENT OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CAME FROM THE RURAL AREAS.

THIS WAS ONE PROOF THAT THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY TO UPLIFT LIVING STANDARDS IN THE RURAL AREAS AND RESTRUCTURE SOCIETY WAS PRODUCING ENCOURAGING RESULTS.

HE PRAISED THE SCHOOL WHICH HAD ENCOURAGED ITS STUDENTS TO SAVE \$3,153 WITH THE NATIONAL SAVINGS BANK. -- BERNAMA 1620/IB