

79 (P)
PENANG, NOV. 10 (BERNAMA)—DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY THAT AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT GROUP IS USING RELIGIOUS ISSUES TO TRY AND INFLUENCE LOCAL AND OVERSEAS STUDENTS INTO OPPOSING THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY.

HE SAID THAT THIS WAS THE SAME GROUP THAT ATTEMPTED TO MAKE THE NEP FAIL FROM 1973 TO 1975 THROUGH THE USE OF SOCIALISM ISSUES.

THE GROUP ALSO HAD THE INTENTION OF WEAKENING AND RUINING UMNO, HE SAID WHEN OPENING A ONE-DAY COURSE HERE FOR UMNO INFORMATION HEADS FROM 169 BRANCHES IN THE STATE.

THE GROUP WAS NOW TRYING TO INFLUENCE FROM FIVE AND SIX STUDENTS IN THE COUNTRY AND "A" LEVEL STUDENTS ABROAD, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT SINCE THE GOVERNMENT THWARTED THEIR ATTEMPTS WHEN THEY USED SOCIALISM ISSUES THEY WERE NOW TURNING TO RELIGIOUS ISSUES.

IN THIS CONNECTION, HE URGED UMNO MEMBERS TO ACT EARLY TO AVERT MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT MIGHT OCCUR AMONG THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

—BERNAMA MORE HM 1519

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO WIN THE STUDENTS OVER, THE GROUP RAISED QUESTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND THE RIGHT OF THE STUDENTS TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS.

HE SAID THAT UMNO MEMBERS MUST UNDERSTAND THEIR PARTY'S STAND ON CERTAIN ISSUES TO FOIL THE GROUP'S ACTIONS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO'S DEPUTY PRESIDENT, ALSO SAID THAT CERTAIN PEOPLE INCLUDING FOREIGN JOURNALISTS CRITICISED MALAYSIA AND CLAIMED THAT THE AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT PERMIT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS.

HE SAID THAT THERE WERE LAWS REGARDING DEMONSTRATIONS.