

NO39 (F)
MAHATHIR

80 P
KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 17 (BERNAMA) — DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK DR MAHATHIR MOHAMED, TODAY UWARNED OF THE DANGER OF ANARCHY RESULTING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELITE AND EXCLUSIVE GROUPS IN THE COUNTRY AND THE REGION.

SUCH GROUPS, INSTEAD OF BECOMING THE STRENGTH OF THE NATION WERE INDEED SEEN TO BE THE CAUSE OF TENSION, INSTABILITY AND REVOLUTION, HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE 46TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE FEDERATED TEOCHEW ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA HERE.

HE SAID: "THE STRENGTH OF THE NATION IS THE SUM TOTAL OF THE STRENGTH OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE CITIZENS. BUT THE ARITHMETIC OF STRENGTH IS NOT THIS SIMPLE.

SSSWE SEE TODAY HOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GROUP INTO A SUPER RICH ELITE, WHILE THE REST OF THE CITIZENS REMAIN POOR, HAS NOT ADDED UP TO THE TOTAL STRENGTH OF THE NATION.

"INDEED, IT IS SEEN TO BE A CAUSE OF TENSION, INSTABILITY AND REVOLUTION AND DISSOLVES INTO ANARCHY.

—BERNAMA MORE 1654/AN

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR STRESSED THAT THE STRENGTH OF THE NATION, THEREFORE, WAS NOT A SIMPLE SUM OF THE STRENGTH OF ALL CITIZENS, THEIR GROUPS AND SUB-GROUPS, BUT THE SUM OF EQUAL PARTS WHICH WERE WELL-BALANCED AND CONSIDERATE OF EACH OTHER.

"THEN, THE ENVY AND JEALOUSY BETWEEN GROUPS WOULD BE DIMINISHED AND THE NATION WOULD NOT BE DIVIDED WITHIN ITSELF" HE ADDED.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS SURE THAT CLAN ASSOCIATIONS OF MALAYSIA AND OTHER ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD HELP TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS THAT WOULD ELIMINATE THE POSSIBILITY OF ELITISM AND EXCLUSIVITY FROM EMERGING.

"I AM SURE THAT THE CLAN ASSOCIATIONS ARE NOW MORE BROAD-MINDED AND WILL NOT CONFINE THEIR CIVIC ACTIVITIES ONLY TO MEMBERS OF THE SAME CLAN," HE SAID.

"THE ORIGINAL NEED FOR THE CLAN ASSOCIATIONS IN LOOKING AFTER THE NEW IMMIGRANTS OF THE SAME CLAN IS NO LONGER RELEVANT. THERE ARE NO MORE SUCH IMMIGRANTS.

"ON THE OTHER HAND THE TEOCHEWS OF MALAYSIA HAVE INTEGRATED THEMSELVES WITH THE REST OF THE CHINESE COMMUNITY AND INDEED WITH THE OTHER COMMUNITIES."

THIS PROCESS OF INTEGRATION, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID, WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE WELL BEING OF MALAYSIA.

—BERNAMA MORE 1659/AN
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"WE ALL WANT TO BE MALAYSIANS FIRST. BUT, THERE IS NO HARM IN BEING SENTIMENTALLY ATTACHED TO OUR ETHNIC AND CLAN POST," HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNMENT UNDERSTOOD THIS WISH AND THAT WAS WHY CLAN ASSOCIATIONS STILL FLOURISH IN MALAYSIA.

WHILE NOTING THAT IT WAS GOOD THAT THE TEOCHEWS KEEP ALIVE THEIR LINKS WITH OTHER TEOCHEWS IN THE ASEAN REGION, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS SURE IT WAS NOT THEIR INTENTION TO FORM A CLAN SUB-GROUP IN ASEAN.

"SUCH A GROUPING WOULD CREATE UNDUE SUSPICION AND JEALOUSY AND CAUSE OTHER SUB-GROUPS BASED ON RACE OR RELIGION OR SOME ETHNIC CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES TO FORM THEIR OWN GROUPS," HE ADDED.

HE STRESSED THAT THE NET RESULT WOULD BE DIVISIVENESS WHICH WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE GENERAL WELL-BEING OF ASEAN.

HE SAID ASEAN, AS A GROUPING OF NATIONS OF THE SAME GEOGRAPHICAL REGION INTENDED TO BENEFIT ALL THE CITIZENS OF THE MEMBER COUNTRIES AND ITS ROLE WAS LARGELY ECONOMIC.

"THE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH IN ANY COUNTRY IS ALWAYS A MATTER OF DISPUTE, AND IT WOULD NOT DO FOR ASEAN TO BE ASSAILED BY PROBLEMS OF WEALTH DISTRIBUTION BASED ON SOCIAL, CULTURAL OR ETHNIC DIFFERENCES" HE POINTED OUT.

—BERNAMA 1708/AN