

NO51: (F)
LEAD MAHATHIR-UMNO
EM

KUALA LUMPUR, NOV 27⁸¹ (BERNAMA) - DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD REITERATED TODAY THAT UMNO DOES NOT HAVE ANY OBJECTION TO PAS REJOINING THE BARISAN NASIONAL, BUT THE INITIATIVE MUST COME FROM PAS.

THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID THAT IF PAS SO DESIRED, IT MUST FOLLOW THE NORMAL PRACTICE WHEREBY SMALL PARTIES SHOULD SEEK TO AFFILIATE THEMSELVES TO THE BIGGER ONES AND NOT THE OTHER WAY ROUND.

SIMILARLY, IF AN ORGANISATION DELAYED JOINING A GROUPING, IT SHOULD MAKE THE FIRST APPROACH IF IT WANTED TO JOIN THE GROUPING WHICH HAD LONG BEEN ESTABLISHED, HE SAID.

HE TOLD THIS TO REPORTERS WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIS STATEMENT THAT UMNO WAS PREPARED TO BE ON GOOD TERMS AND TO CO-OPERATE WITH THOSE WHO HAD ALL THIS WHILE ACCUSED IT OF NOT CARRYING OUT ADMINISTRATION ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC LAWS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD MADE THE STATEMENT WHEN OPENING A COURSE ORGANISED BY THE PARTY'S RELIGIOUS BUREAU AT ITS HEADQUARTERS HERE. -- BERNAMA MORE 1634/A1

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ASKED IF HIS STATEMENT COULD BE INTERPRETED AS UMNO'S WISH TO SEE THE MUSLIMS UNITED IN THE FACE OF A GENERAL ELECTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID SMILINGLY, +AT THIS MOMENT, EVERYTHING IS SEEN AS AN ELECTION FEVER.+

+THE BUDGET PRESENTED RECENTLY WAS ALSO INTERPRETED AS AN ELECTION BUDGET ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT HAD NEVER PRESENTED A BUDGET THAT BURDENED THE PEOPLE SINCE SIX YEARS AGO,+ HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON PRESS REPORTS OF ATTEMPTS BY CERTAIN GROUPS IN UMNO TO TOPPLE SEVERAL VETERAN LEADERS IN PAHANG UMNO, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DESCRIBED THIS AS +RIPPLES+ NORMALLY FOUND IN ANY PARTY.

+IF THERE ARE NO SUCH INCIDENTS, IT IS NOT CALLED A PARTY AND NEWSPAPERS WILL NOT HAVE ANY MATERIAL TO REPORT,+ HE ADDED.
-- BERNAMA 1659/A1