

NO79 (F)
MAHATHIR - BERJAYA
BM

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KOTA KINABALU, FEB. 14 (BERNAMA) — ACTING PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) TODAY PRAISED THE SABAH GOVERNMENT FOR THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT IT HAS BROUGHT TO THE STATE OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS.

OPENING THE \$40 MILLION BERJAYA HEADQUARTERS BUILDING HERE, HE SAID NO ONE COULD DENY THAT THE STATE HAD BEEN ABLE TO STABILISE ITS ECONOMY UNDER THE BERJAYA GOVERNMENT.

HE STRESSED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS DESIROUS TO SEE THAT THE STATES WERE PROPERLY ADMINISTERED UNDER THE +FEDERATION SYSTEM+ WHERE STATE GOVERNMENTS WERE GIVEN CERTAIN POWERS.

THE USE OF SUCH POWERS, BE IT AT FEDERAL OR STATE LEVEL, WAS AN IMPORTANT MATTER WHICH DETERMINED GOOD OR POOR COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STATE, HE SAID.

HE WAS HAPPY TO NOTE THAT THERE WERE NO PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE SABAH GOVERNMENT ALTHOUGH THE POWERS GIVEN TO THE STATE WERE MORE THAN THOSE GIVEN TO OTHER STATES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE TO CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES IN SABAH WITHOUT HINDRANCE ALTHOUGH AT ONE TIME MANY PROBLEMS HAD CROPPED UP. —BERNAMA MORE 1810/AH

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PRESENT AT THE OPENING OF THE 10-STOREY BUILDING WERE MENTRIS BESAR AND CHIEF MINISTERS, DEWAN RAKYAT SPEAKER TAN SRI SYED NASIR ISMAIL, LEADERS OF BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES AND STATE DIGNITARIES.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT DEVELOPMENT OF A STATE IN MALAYSIA DEPENDED NOT ON THE FINANCIAL SUPPLY ALONE BUT ALSO ON THE EFFICIENCY OF ITS OFFICERS AND THE COOPERATION OF THE PEOPLE.

HE ADDED THAT WHEN SABAH ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE THROUGH MALAYSIA NOT MANY MALAYSIANS IN SABAH POSSESSED ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS WERE ALSO LIMITED.

BUT, WITHIN A SHORT TIME, OFFICERS IN SABAH HAD PROGRESSED AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS HAD ALSO IMPROVED, HE SAID. THERE WAS NOW NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OFFICERS FROM THE STATE AND THOSE FROM OTHER PLACES IN THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR NOTED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IN SABAH WAS MOVING SMOOTHLY WITH MANY NEW IDEAS BEING INTRODUCED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS PEOPLE.

+OTHER STATES IN MALAYSIA SHOULD FOLLOW WHAT IS BEING DONE BY SABAH+, HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1840/ZCM

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ON POLITICS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR EMPHASISED THAT THE BARISAN NASIONAL'S STAND ON ALL DISPUTES AMONG ITS COMPONENT PARTIES WAS ONE OF NEUTRALITY.

+WE ARE NEUTRAL AND DO NOT SUPPORT OR OPPOSE WHICHEVER SIDE IN THEIR DISPUTE ALTHOUGH WE SUPPORT ALL COMPONENT PARTIES WHEN THEY FACE OTHER PARTIES WHICH OPPOSE THE BARISAN NASIONAL,+ HE SAID.

WITHOUT IDENTIFYING THE PARTIES INVOLVED, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MENTIONED A RECENT DISPUTE BETWEEN TWO COMPONENT PARTIES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA. TO AVOID DISUNITY, THE INCIDENT WAS TURNED INTO A HUMOUROUS ONE WHERE BOTH SIDES LATER WITHDREW THEIR CHALLENGES AGAINST EACH OTHER.

SAYING THAT DEMOCRACY ONLY GAVE BENEFITS AND SUCCESS IF PROPERLY PRACTICED, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID SUCH BENEFITS WOULD BE LOST IF FORCE OR THREAT WAS USED AND THERE WOULD BE CHAOS IN THE COUNTRY.

HE ADDED THAT IN THE SYSTEM OF DEMOCRACY PRACTICED IN MALAYSIA THE WAYS TO OVERCOME PROBLEMS OR TO PUT FORWARD COMPLAINTS WERE WELL LAID OUT. +WE SHOULD MAKE USE OF THESE AND NOT FORCE THE COUNTRY TO ACCEPT OUR WILL THROUGH UNDEMOCRATIC ACTION SUCH AS DEMONSTRATIONS, DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY OR DESTROYING OTHER PEOPLE,+ HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1844/ZCM
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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ADDED THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME PEOPLE WHO HELD THE VIEW THAT MALAYSIA WAS UNDEMOCRATIC.

MALAYSIA, HE SAID, PRACTICED A MODERATE FORM OF DEMOCRACY WHICH EMPHASISED NOT ONLY INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM BUT ALSO THE INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY AND NATION.

“IN MY VIEW MALAYSIA IS MORE DEMOCRATIC THAN MOST OTHER COUNTRIES,” HE ADDED.

EARLIER, THE CHIEF MINISTER, DATUK HARRIS SALLEH, SAID THAT ALTHOUGH BERJAYA COULD BE PROUD OF ITS ACHIEVEMENTS, IT WAS AWARE OF ITS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A MULTI-RACIAL RULING PARTY.

HE ADDED THAT THE PARTY WAS ALSO AWARE THAT THE WHOLE COUNTRY WAS WATCHING ITS PERFORMANCE WITH A CRITICAL EYE BECAUSE THE MULTI-RACIAL CONCEPT IN SABAH WAS UNDERGOING CHANGE.

THE PARTY HAD HOWEVER PROVED THAT IT WAS ACCEPTED BY A LARGE SECTION OF THE PEOPLE AND THE RESULTS OF THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS WOULD CONFIRM THIS TRUTH, HE SAID.

DATUK HARRIS ADDED THAT THE PARTY WOULD SEEK A FRESH MANDATE FROM THE PEOPLE ON THE RECORD OF ITS ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS.—BERNAMA 1855/HM