

N81 (F)
MAHATHIR - COMPROMISE
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 17 (BERNAMA) — DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS TOO CLOSE NOW FOR HIM TO INITIATE ANY COMPROMISE IN THE ELECTION FOR POST OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE PARTY.

DELEGATES HAD THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE WHOM THEY WANT AS DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR HIM TO USURP THIS RIGHT, HE TOLD PRESSMEN AFTER OPENING THE DAMANSARA UMNO DIVISION DELEGATES' MEETING HERE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT, SAID THAT EVEN THE POST OF PRESIDENT HAD BEEN LEFT OPEN AS DATUK HUSSEIN ONN, WHEN ANNOUNCING HIS DISCISION TO STEP DOWN, HAD NOT STATED HIS PREFERENCE IN CHOICE OF HIS SUCCESSOR AS UMNO PRESIDENT.

THIS CHOICE WOULD BE MADE BY THE DELEGATES AT THE PARTY ELECTIONS IN THE ASSEMBLY IN JUNE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT CERTAIN CANDIDATES HAD BEEN NOMINATED FOR THE PARTY PRESIDENCY AND ADDED THAT HE HAD YET TO SIGN THE FORM AGREEING TO ACCEPT NOMINATION FOR POST OF PRESIDENT. — BERNAMA MORE 2127/AZ

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HE SAID THAT HE WANTED UMNO MEMBERS TO CLOSE RANKS AFTER THE ELECTIONS WERE OVER REGARDLESS OF WHO WERE ELECTED TO OFFICE.

EARLIER, IN OPENING THE MEETING, HE SAID THAT UMNO WAS A DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ORGANISATION, AND AS SUCH, IT WAS THE MEMBERS AND NOT THE LEADERS WHO HELD THE REAL POWER BECAUSE THEIR VOTING RIGHTS ENABLED THEM TO MAKE OR BREAK LEADERS.

ALTHOUGH THIS RIGHT WAS EXERCISED ONLY ON SPECIFIC OCCASIONS, IT WAS NEVERTHELESS A POWERFUL WEAPON.

HE STRESSED THAT UMNO MEMBERS SHOULD BE CLEAR IN THEIR MIND AS TO WHOM THEY WANTED AS LEADERS BECUASE PARTY ELECTIONS CAME ONLY ONCE IN EVERY THREE YEARS AND THREE YEARS WERE A LONG TIME TO WAIT SHOULD THEY REGRET THEIR CHOICE AND WISH TO ELECT OTHER LEADERS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD BE WATCHING THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL ELECTIONS FROM JUNE 26 TO 29 BECAUSE THE RESULTS WOULD HAVE INTERNATIONAL AS WELL AS NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS—BERNAMA MORE 2208/MK

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ON THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY, HE SAID THAT \$80 MILLION HAD BEEN INVESTED IN THE NATIONAL UNIT TRUST SCHEME SO FAR. THE TARGET WAS \$16,000 MILLION BY 1990.

HE DESCRIBED THE AMOUNT AS STILL SMALL BUT WAS CONFIDENT MORE BUMIPUTRAS WOULD INVEST IN THE SCHEME BEFORE END OF NEXT MONTH.

HE STRESSED THAT SUCCESS OF THE SCHEME WOULD GIVE BUMIPUTRAS AT LEAST 30 PERCENT OWNERSHIP OF THE CORPORATE SECTOR IN THE COUNTRY. —BERNAMA 2215/MK