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MALACCA, MAY 25 (BERNAMA) — [DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD] EXPRESSED THE HOPE TODAY THAT THE CONTEST FOR THE DEPUTY PRESIDENCY AT THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY NEXT MONTH WOULD BE CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO THE PARTY'S TRADITION.

HE STRESSED THAT THE CONTEST WAS AN INTERNAL PARTY MATTER +AND NO ONE ELSE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHO WILL BE OUR LEADERS.+

+AS SUCH, WE SHOULD NOT, IN OUR LAGERNESS TO HELP THE CANDIDATE OF OUR CHOICE WIN THE CONTEST, DO ANY THING WITHOUT DUE REGARD TO WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO UMNO,+ HE SAID.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID UMNO WOULD TRY TO CONDUCT THE CONTEST FOR THE LEADERSHIP FREE FROM ANY UNDERSIRABLE INCIDENTS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT, WAS OPENING THE JASIN UMNO DIVISION DELEGATES CONFERENCE AT SEKOLAH ISKANDAR SHAH, ABOUT 30 KM FROM HERE.

ON THREATS THAT WERE ALLEGEDLY MADE AGAINST MEMBERS WHO DID NOT SUPPORT A CERTAIN CANDIDATE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE CANDIDATE HIMSELF WAS UNAWARE OF SUCH UNHEALTHY PRACTICES BEING PERPERTRATED IN HIS NAME.—BERNAMA MORE 1735/MK

NO76 (F)
MAHATHIR-UMNO 2 MALACCA

+AS LONG AS UMNO IS THE RULING PARTY AND AS LONG AS I AM IN POWER, SUCH THREATS WILL NOT BE CONDONED, EVEN IF THEY ARE TRUE,+ HE STRESSED.

AS SUCH, NO ONE SHOULD FEEL AFRAID OF LOSING HIS POSITION IN THE GOVERNMENT OR IN THE PARTY IF THEY DID NOT GIVE IN TO SUCH THREATS.

HE ALSO REMINDED UMNO MEMBERS THAT THERE WAS MUCH MORE TO BE DONE AS THE PARTY HAD YET TO ACHIEVE 100PER CENT SUCCESS IN ITS STRUGGLE.

IN FACT, THEY WOULD NOT ACHIEVE ALL THAT THEY HAD HOPED FOR BECAUSE IN THE LONG TERM THEY WERE CONSTANTLY INCREASING THEIR LIST OF WANTS.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS LATER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT THERE WERE SO FAR NO INDICATIONS WHETHER HIS SUGGESTION TO THE TWO CANDIDATES FOR THE POST OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT TO CONTEST FOR THE VICE PRESIDENCY AS WELL HAD BEEN RECEIVED.

HE SAID: +IF THERE ARE ANY DECISIONS FROM THE TWO OF THEM, THEY SHOULD INFORM THE UMNO HEADQUARTERS AND IT IS NOT MY DUTY TO ASK THEM.+---BERNAMA MORE 1740/MK

NO77 (F)
MAHATHIR-UMNO 3 MALACCA

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IT WAS AN UMNO TRADITION THAT A MEMBER WAS FREE TO CONTEST FOR ANY POS: IN THE PARTY.

ON THE PRICE OF SUGAR, HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS CLOSELY MONITORING THE POSITION OF THE COMMODITY'S PRICE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PRICE WOULD REMAIN OR IF IT WOULD CONTINUE TO FLUCTUATE.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT TO REDUCE THE PRICE IMMEDIATELY BECAUSE IF THE PRICE OF SUGAR ON THE WORLD MARKET INCREASED AGAIN, THE LOCAL PRICE WOULD ALSO GO UP AGAIN.

SUCH AN ACTION WOULD INCONVIENCE THE PEOPLE AND IT WAS BETTER THAT A DETAILED STUDY BE MADE BEFORE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE MADE.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE OPENING WERE UMNO VICE PRESIDENTS DATUK MUSA HITAM AND ENCIK GHAFAR BABA AND MALACCA CHIEF MINISTER ENCIK ADIB ADAM.—BERNAMA 1744/MK