

MAHATHIR - UMNO
BM

82 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 25 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID UMNO MUST ENSURE THAT MALAYSIA IS WELL ADMINISTERED AND DEVELOPED INTO A COUNTRY RESPECTED BY THE WORLD.

UMNO MUST ALSO PLAY ITS ROLE SO THAT THE COUNTRY WOULD CONTINUE TO PROGRESS AND BE ABLE TO DEFEND ITSELF AS WELL AS TO STAND ON ITS OWN FEET.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THIS IN A SPECIAL INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE LATEST ISSUE OF MERDEKA -- THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF UMNO MALAYSIA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE 25TH MERDEKA ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WISHED TO SEE UMNO GROW TO BE A STABLE, DISCIPLINED AND POWERFUL PARTY.

UMNO MUST EXIST PARTICULARLY FOR THE INTEREST OF THE MALAYS WHO ARE MUSLIMS AND FOR THE INTEREST OF THE NATION WHICH HAS A MULTI-RACIAL POPULATION. -- MORE 1905/PA

MAHATHIR - UMNO 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE FACT THAT IT HAD SURVIVED FOR 36 YEARS UNTIL NOW WITHOUT ANY DISUNITY WAS NOT A SMALL ACHIEVEMENT, HE ADDED.

HE SAID MANY OTHER PARTIES WHICH HAD FOUGHT FOR THEIR COUNTRIES' INDEPENDANCE, HAD FALLEN APART AFTER INDEPENDENCE WAS ACHIEVED.

HOWEVER, UMNO, THOUGH SUFFERED SOME FRICTIONS AMONG ITS LEADERS AND MEMBERS, CONTINUED TO BECOME A STRONG ORGANISATION AND THIS STRENGTH WAS CONTINUING AND ITS MEMBERSHIP WAS GROWING.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID UMNO PRACTISED THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

"IF UMNO DID NOT PRACTISE DEMOCRACY, SURELY PEOPLE LIKE ME WILL NOT HAVE ANY OPPORTUNITY AT ALL," HE SAID. -- MORE 1906/PA

N144:

MAHATHIR - UMNO 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID ALTHOUGH UMNO WAS A LITTLE FEUDALISTIC IT DID NOT DENY THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ORDINARY PEOPLE TO PLAY A BIG ROLE IN THE PARTY.

HE SAID ALTHOUGH HE WAS ONCE DISMISSED FROM THE PARTY IT DID NOT MEAN THAT HE WAS NOT ACCEPTED AT ALL BY THE PARTY THEN.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID AFTER HIS DISMISSAL, HE CONTINUED TO BELIEVE STRONGLY IN UMNO'S STRUGGLES AND IN THE END, HE WAS AGAIN ACCEPTED INTO THE PARTY UNTIL HE ROSE TO BECOME A LEADER.

HE SAID SUCH A FATE MIGHT ALSO BE FACED BY OTHER PEOPLE.

ON ISLAM, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT UMNO HAD ALSO FOUGHT TO SAFEGUARD THE RELIGION. -- BERNAMA 1910/PA