

MAHATHIR-WINDING UP

BM

83 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT. 12 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD ASKED ALL UMNO MEMBERS TODAY TO PLACE THEIR TRUST IN THE CURRENT LEADERS WHOM THEY THEMSELVES HAVE ELECTED TO LEAD THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT SAID THE LEADERS NEEDED BACKING OF ALL MEMBERS TO DISCHARGE THE RESPONSIBILITIES ENTRUSTED TO THEM.

LEADERSHIP WAS A TRANSIENT CONDITION AND LEADERS WOULD NOT HOLD THEIR POSTS FOR LIFE, HE ADDED WHEN REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED DURING THE DEBATE ON HIS POLICY SPEECH OPENING THE 33RD UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE THREE-DAY ASSEMBLY ENDS TODAY.

+THIS IS THE ONLY THING I ASK OF YOU BECAUSE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR LEADERS TO CONTINUE WITH THE PARTY'S STRUGGLES IF MEMBERS DO NOT HAVE FAITH IN THEM AND RAISE DOUBTS AS TO THEIR LEADERSHIP,+ HE SAID.

+IF MEMBERS FEEL THAT THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCILLORS ARE NOT FIT TO LEAD THE PARTY, THEN THEY CAN ALWAYS THROW THEM OUT IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN 1984,+ HE ADDED TO LAUGHTER BY DELEGATES AT THE ASSEMBLY.

-- MORE 1607/AZ

MAHATHIR - WINDING UP 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT LEADERS WHO NO LONGER ENJOYED THE TRUST OF MEMBERS SHOULD BOW OUT GRACEFULLY WITHOUT HAVING TO BE FORCED.

HE SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO DO THIS IF HE WAS NO LONGER WANTED BY THE MEMBERS.

HE ALSO SAID AGE ALONE SHOULD NOT BE THE REASON, WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WAS WHETHER THE LEADER COULD STILL PROVIDE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

+IF THERE ARE SIGNS INDICATING THAT MEMBERS ARE DISCONTENTED WITH A LEADER, THEN THE LEADER SHOULD STEP DOWN.

+I PROMISE THAT IF IT HAPPENS TO ME, I WILL STEP DOWN AND I EXPECT THE SAME UNDERTAKING FROM ALL ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES.+

HE DISMISSED ALLEGATIONS THAT CANDIDATES OF ADVANCED YEARS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO CONTEST IN GENERAL ELECTIONS.

+AT 56 YEARS OF AGE, I AM THE OLDEST PRIME MINISTER OF THE COUNTRY SO FAR AND IT IS UNREASONABLE TO ASK ME TO RESIGN JUST BECAUSE OF MY AGE, +HE ADDED IN A LIGHTER VEIN. -- MORE 1645/PA

MAHATHIR - WINDING UP 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES WHO MADE WAY FOR OTHER CANDIDATES NOMINATED IN THEIR PLACE IN THE LAST GENERAL ELECTION AND WHO UNSELFISHLY WORKED FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW MAN SHOULD BE GIVEN THE HIGHEST HONOUR AS TRUE NATIONALISTS.

+I HOPE THE PRESENT ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES EMULATED THIS FINE EXAMPLE.

+DO NOT HIT OUT AT OLD LEADERS WHO HAVE REFUSED TO GIVE UP THEIR POSTS AND THEN SHOW THE SAME DISINCLINATION WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR TURN.+

HE MADE THESE CLARIFICATIONS FOLLOWING ALLEGATIONS BY SOME DELEGATES OF FAVOURITISM AND DEVIATIONS FROM THE UMNO CONSTITUTION IN THE SELECTION OF PARTY CANDIDATES FOR THE LAST GENERAL ELECTION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR STRESSED THAT HE HAD NEVER PRACTISED FAVOURITISM IN THE SELECTION OF UMNO CANDIDATES FOR EITHER PARTY POSTS OR ELECTIONS.

THIS ATTITUDE OF NON-PARTISANSHIP WOULD BE MAINTAINED, HE ADDED.

IN THIS CONNECTION, THE CONSENSUAL METHOD OF SELECTING CANDIDATES THROUGH DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE SUPREME COUNCIL AND DIVISIONS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE USED. -- MORE 1649/PA

MAHATHIR - WINDING UP 4 KUALA LUMPUR .

+WITH REGARD TO THE ALLEGATIONS OF FAVOURITISM, ONLY ALLAH KNOWS MY INNOCENCE AND IF NECESSARY, I AM PREPARED TO SWEAR ON THE GURAN IN A MOSQUE,+ HE ADDED.

HIS STATEMENT WAS RECEIVED BY THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE FROM DELEGATES PRESENT.

DATUK SERI DR.MAHATHIR DISCLOSED THAT TO AVERT SUCH ACCUSATIONS, HE PROHIBITED HIS WIFE FROM CONTESTING IN THE RECENT WANITA UMNO PARTY ELECTIONS.

+I TOLD HER THAT IT WAS ALL RIGHT FOR HER TO TAKE PART IN WANITA UMNO BUT NOT TO CONTEST FOR ANY POST FOR FEAR THAT PEOPLE WILL SAY THAT JUST BECAUSE THE HUSBAND IS THE UMNO PRESIDENT, THE WIFE TOO WANTS A LEADERSHIP POST.+

HOWEVER, IT WOULD NOT BE FAIR TO DENY RIGHT OF RELATIVES TO GO FOR POSTS JUST BECAUSE THEY HAD FAMILY TIES WITH HIM.

HE MADE THE STATEMENTS FOLLOWING ALLEGATIONS BY A DELEGATE THAT HE HAD SHOWN FAVOURITISM IN THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE APRIL GENERAL ELECTION AND HAD NOT HELD DISCUSSIONS ON THE MATTER WITH DIVISIONS. -- MORE 1740/AH

N130 (F)

MAHATHIR - WINDING UP 5 KUALA LUMPUR

+ASK DATUK HARUN HOW DIFFICULT IT WAS FOR ME TO DECIDE ON THE FINAL LINEUP FOR SELANGOR,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE ONLY KNEW THAT SOMEONE RELATED TO HIS WIFE WAS SEELECTED AFTER THE SELECTION HAD BEEN MADE, IN APPARENT REFERENCE TO APPOINTMENT OF HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, DATUK HAJI AHMAD RAZALI ALI, AS SELANGOR MENTRI BESAR.

HE SAID SELECTION OF THE CANDIDATES WAS BASED ON PARTY CONSTITUTION ALTHOUGH THE CONSTITUTION DID NOT CLEARLY DEFINE THE METHOD BY WHICH THE SELECTION SHOULD BE EFFECTED.

THE CONSTITUTION DID NOT STATE WHETHER DISCUSSIONS TO SELECT CANDIDATES PROPOSED BY DIVISIONS WERE BINDING ON THE SUPREME COUNCIL.

+IF THIS IS SO, THERE IS NO NECESSITY TO HAVE SUCH DISCUSSIONS. DIVISIONS WILL JUST SELECT THE CANDIDATES AND THEIR DECISION SHOULD BE ACCEPTED TOTALLY BY THE SUPREME COUNCIL.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS NOT FEASIBLE TO ENTRUST THE SELECTION SOLELY TO DIVISIONS BECAUSE DIVISIONAL LEVEL POLITICS WERE JUST AS VEXING AS NATIONAL-LEVEL POLITICS. -- MORE 1743/AH

N131 (F)
MAHATHIR - WINDING UP 6 KUALA LUMPUR

+THE CAMPAIGNS FOR POSTS OF DIVISION HEADS WERE SO HEATED THAT SOME CANDIDATES EVEN RESORTED TO CORRUPT PRACTICES.

+ALL THIS WE KNOW, YET THERE ARE SOME DELEGATES WHO DARE QUESTION ME IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUT DID NOT DARE QUESTION THOSE IN POWER IN THE DIVISIONS.+

HE SAID THE SHORTNESS OF TIME ALSO REQUIRED THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES TO BE MADE AS SPEEDILY AS POSSIBLE.

+WE DO NOT NEED TO TELL THE WHOLE WORLD A YEAR BEFOREHAND THAT WE ARE HAVING A GENERAL ELECTION JUST BECAUSE WE WANT THE SUPREME COUNCIL TO HAVE TIME TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH ALL 114 DIVISIONS AND TO START THE CAMPAIGNING.

+ALL UMNO MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW THAT IN THE QUESTION OF GENERAL ELECTIONS, THE DECISION ON THE DATE IS USUALLY MADE AT THE LASTMINUTE SO AS NOT TO GIVE OPPOSITION PARTIES PLENTY OF TIME TO DRAW UP THEIR ELECTION STRATEGIES.+ -- MORE 1748/AH

N133 (F)
MAHATHIR - WINDING UP 7 KUALA LUMPUR

BEFORE THE CANDIDATES WERE SELECTED, A NUMBER OF LEADERS INCLUDING THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE PARTY WERE GIVEN THE MISSION OF VISITING STATES TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.

THE LISTS OF CANDIDATES PROPOSED ALSO CONTAINED SEVERAL OTHER POSSIBLE CHOICES AND IT DID NOT MEAN THAT THE FIRST CHOICE ON THE LISTS WERE AUTOMATICALLY ACCEPTED OR THAT NAMES NOT IN THE LISTS WERE AUTOMATICALLY EXCLUDED. --BERNAMA 1750/AH