

UMNO-MAHATHIR
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KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 17/ (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD URGED THE PEOPLE TODAY TO WORK WITH DISCIPLINE TO BUILD A PROGRESSIVE AND HARMONIOUS MALAYSIA AND GIVE MEANING TO THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT EFFORTS MUST BE KEPT UP TO PRESERVE THE STANDING AND DIGNITY OF THE NATION AND ITS PEOPLE.

THESE EFFORTS SHOULD NOT BE MOTIVATED BY ARROGANCE AND A WISH TO SHOW OFF OR A DESIRE TO BECOME A CONQUERING SUPER POWER, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS DELIVERING HIS POLICY SPEECH AS UMNO PRESIDENT AT THE PARTY'S 34TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE KUALA LUMPUR HILTON.

LEADERS OF THE OTHER COMPONENT PARTIES OF BARISAN NASIONAL AND OBSERVERS WERE AMONG THE 2,000 PEOPLE PRESENT.

-- MORE 1148/LK

UMNO-MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT MALAYSIA, BY BECOMING A PROGRESSIVE AND HARMONIOUS NATION, WOULD BE CONTRIBUTING TO THE WELL-BEING OF MANKIND.

"WE SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE DEDICATED IN GUIDING THE NATION TOWARDS HARMONY AND PEACE AND CONSTANTLY GIVE MEANING TO OUR INDEPENDENCE," HE SAID.

"WE MUST CARRY OUT SUCH EFFORTS WITH DISCIPLINE SO THAT EVERY GENERATION OF OURS WILL NOT BE WEAK, AND WE MUST NOT ALLOW FANTASY AND LUST AND OTHER UNHEALTHY TRAITS TO PERMEATE OUR THINKING AND WAY OF LIFE."

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE NATION +AS AN ORGANISM+ WANTED HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND LONG LIFE.

BY THE SAME TOKEN, IT WAS ALSO EXPOSED TO DISEASES AND PROBLEMS WHICH, IF LEFT UNCHECKED, WOULD JEOPARDISE ITS HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND LONGEVITY.

-- MORE 1200/LK

UMNO - MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT EVENTS IN THE PRESENT-DAY WORLD AND IN HISTORY SHOWED HOW WHOLE NATIONS COULD BECOME WEAK AND DISSAPPEAR.

THE FALL OF THE ROMAN, BYZANTINE, TURKISH, PERSIAN AND BRITISH EMPIRES SHOWED HOW EVEN THE MIGHTY COULD FADE AWAY OR BE DESTROYED, HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE MALAY EMPIRE FOLLOWED A SIMILAR COURSE. THE SRIWIJAYA AND MELAKA GOVERNMENTS EMERGED AS A GROUPING OF SMALL TERRITORIES, EXPANDED AND BECAME AN EMPIRE ONLY TO SPLIT AND 'DISSAPPEAR' COMPLETELY FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH."

"THERE ARE LESSONS IN ALL THIS FOR US AND ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT IS THAT WEAKNESSES CAN PERVADE SOCIETY AND DESTROY A MIGHTY GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REFERRED TO THE THEORY ON THE RISE AND DECAY OF SOCIETIES EXPOUNDED BY IBN KHALDUN, THE 14TH CENTURY ARAB SCHOLAR WHO IS CELEBRATED AS A PIONEER IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. -- MORE 1315/MB

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UMNO - MAHATHIR 4 KUALA LUMPUR

ACCORDING TO THE THEORY, THE FIRST GENERATION WITH STRONG WILL AND HARD WORK LAYS A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR THE NATION.

THE SECOND BUILDS ON THAT FOUNDATION TO BRING THE NATION TO THE HEIGHT OF ITS GLORY WHILE THE THIRD GENERATION, LULLED BY LUXURY AND ALL THE GLITTER AND LACKING SPIRIT, SOWS THE SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE THEORY NEED NOT HOLD TRUE FOR ALL SITUATIONS BUT IT COULD WELL TRANSLATE INTO REALITY IF NOT ENOUGH PRECAUTION WAS TAKEN.

+AND IT COULD HAPPEN TO US, EVEN BEFORE WE REACH THE SECOND GENERATION,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO INCULCATE ISLAMIC VALUES IN THE ADMINISTRATION, HE SAID THE RATIONALE WAS THAT NO NATION COULD ACHIEVE AND SUSTAIN HARMONY WITHOUT SUCH VALUES.

-- MORE 1320/MB

UMNO-MAHATHIR 5 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT THESE EFFORTS HAD AROUSED VARIOUS REACTIONS. SOME PEOPLE REGARDED THEM AS A RADICAL MOVE TO CONVERT NON-MUSLIMS WHILE OTHERS SAW IN THEM THE BEGINNINGS OF AN ISLAMIC REVOLUTION.

THERE WERE ALSO PEOPLE WHO BELITTLE THE EFFORTS AS AN +EYE-WASH+ AND STILL OTHERS, WITH SPECIFIC MOTIVES, WHO TRIED TO DISMISS THEM AS A PURELY POLITICAL ACTION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR SUCH RESPONSES, AND STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO COERCION IN ISLAM.

FORCING NON-MUSLIMS TO EMBRACE ISLAM WOULD NOT BENEFIT THE RELIGION, HE SAID.

''WHAT WE WANT IS FOR MUSLIMS TO HAVE ISLAMIC VALUES AND NON-MUSLIMS TO HAVE NOBLE VALUES, WHICH DEFINITELY WILL NOT CONTRADICT ISLAMIC VALUES, AND FOR ALL TO LIVE IN PEACE, HARMONY AND HAPPINESS.''

-- MORE 1358/LK

UMNO-MAHATHIR 6 KUALA LUMPUR

THE PRIME MINISTER REJECTED SUGGESTIONS THAT ONLY ISLAMIC LAWS SHOULD BE ENFORCED IN THE COUNTRY TO MAKE MUSLIMS DEVOUT.

''THIS WOULD ONLY RESULT IN SUPERFICIAL MUSLIMS WHO WOULD RUN HERE AND THERE TO AVOID ISLAMIC LAWS,''

''AND THERE WILL BE EMBRASSING INCIDENTS IN NON-ISLAMIC COUNTRIES WHICH MUSLIMS LIKE TO GO TO.''

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT MUSLIMS WOULD BE MORE COMMITTED TO THEIR RELIGION IF THEY UNDERSTOOD WHAT ISLAM REALLY EXPECTED OF THEM.

TO CONCEAL OR DISTORT VERSES FROM THE QURAN AND SAYINGS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD BECAUSE THEY DID NOT CONFORM TO SOME PEOPLE'S OUTLOOK WOULD NOT HELP TO MAKE MUSLIMS HOLD FAST TO THEIR RELIGION WHEREVER THEY MIGHT BE, HE SAID.

-- MORE 1418/LK

UMNO-MAHATHIR 7 KUALA LUMPUR

''THAT IS WHY THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO EXPLAIN WHAT ISLAM REALLY IS ABOUT NO MATTER WHAT PEOPLE WITH VESTED INTERESTS ALLEGE. IN TRUTH, ISLAM IS A RELIGION OF MODERATION AND THERE IS NO COMPULSION IN ISLAM.''

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT ISLAM STRESSED INTELLIGENCE AND SENSE OF VALUES WHICH SEPARATED MAN FROM ANIMAL AND THIS WAS WHY THE GOVERNMENT WAS MAKING THE INCULCATION OF ISLAMIC VALUES THE THRUST OF ITS EFFORTS FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE AND NATION.

HE SAID: +ISLAMIC VALUES DO NOT DIFFER FROM VALUES UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED AS NOBLE.

''ONLY THOSE WHO BELITTLE MORAL VALUES WHICH ARE REASOABLE WILL FEEL THREATENED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM TO INSTIL ISLAMIC VALUES IN THE ADMINISTRATION AND WORKINGS OF THE NATION.''

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE PEOPLE NEED NOT WORRY ABOUT THE ACTIONS OF CERTAIN EXTREMIST GROUPS BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT MOVED BY TRUE ISLAMIC TEACHINGS AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO WISH TO ABSORB THEIR PRACTICES.

-- BERNAMA 1424/LK