

MAHATHIR-BN

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LABUAN, APRIL 16 (BERNAMA) - DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS CALLED FOR THE FOSTERING OF UNITY AMONG MEMBERS OF BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES TO BOOST THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND BARISAN NASIONAL CHAIRMAN SAID THAT HE WAS HAPPY THAT THE 11 COMPONENT PARTIES WAS HAPPY THAT THE 11 COMPONENT PARTIES WAS UNITED ALTHOUGH THEIR IDEOLOGIES DIFFERED FROM ONE ANOTHER IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INTERESTS THEY REPRESENTED.

THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE RULING COALITION HAD NEVER FACED A CRISIS. IT MEANT THAT ALL CRISES THAT OCCURED, FROM THE TIME OF THE UMNO-MCA-MIC ALLIANCE, WERE OVERCOME +IN THE TRUE MALAYSIAN SPIRIT,+ HE SAID AT A BARISAN NASIONAL DINNER HERE LAST NIGHT.

HE SAID THE READINESS OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO RESOLVE CRISES IN THE SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY POINTED TO THE STRENGTH OF THE COALITION.

CITING AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THE MAY 13 TRAGEDY OF 1969 HAD CAUSED SUCH A CRISIS THAT SOME ALLIANCE LEADERS THEMSELVES HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY AND OF THE ALLIANCE ITSELF.

--MORE 1652/HM

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HOWEVER, THE CARXSES WAS RESOLVED AND THE ALLIANCE WON HANDSOMELY IN THE GENERAL ELECTION HELD SUBSEQUENTLY, HE SAID,

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE COMPONENT PARTIES HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH ONE ANOTHER BECAUSE THEIR LEADERS WERE RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE WHO VALUED, CORDIAL TIES AT ALL LEVELS,

+BECAUSE OF THE UNDERSTANDING 'AMONG US, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DISPROVE FORECASTS OF IMPENDING DOOM MADE BY PEOPLE IN AND OUT OF THE COUNTRY EVERY TIME WE FACE A CRISIS,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING THE MALAYSIAN POPULATION FROM THE PRESENT 14 MILLION TO 70 MILLION IN THE NEXT CENTURY; HE RELEATED THE STORY OF THE ST MARCO BELL IN VENICE WHICH WAS RUNG AT 11.30 EVERY NIGHT TO PREVENT THE RESIDENTS FROM FALLING ASLEEP IMMEDIATELY.

AMID LAUGHTER9 HE SAID: +I DO NOT PLAN TO SET UP SUCH A BELL IN EVERY CORNER OF THE COUNTRY. I HOPE ONLY THAT THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES CAN THINK OF A PRACTICAL WAY TO INCREASE THE POPULATION.+

--BERNAMA 1700/HM