

KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 25 (BERNAMA) - DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CALLED ON UMNO LEADERS, BE THEY LOSERS OR WINNERS IN THE PARTY CONTESTS, TO FORGET ABOUT THE RIVALRY DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND INSTEAD WORK HARD FOR THE GOOD OF UMNO.

"EVERYONE, WINNERS AND LOSERS, SHOULD FORGET THE BITTERNESS OF THE CAMPAIGN AND CONCENTRATE ON STRENGTHENING THE PARTY," THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD REPORTERS DURING TEA BREAK IMMEDIATELY AFTER DELIVERING HIS POLICY ADDRESS AT THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS OF THE UMNO YOUTH AND WANITA ELECTIONS YESTERDAY WHICH SAW ENCIK ANWAR IBRAHIM RETAINED AS LEADER AND DATIN PADUKA RAFIDAH AZIZ AS THE NEW HEAD OF THE WOMEN'S WING.

HOWEVER HE DECLINED TO COMMENT ON WHETHER YESTERDAY'S RESULTS WOULD REFLECT ON THE VOTING FOR THE DEPUTY PRESIDENCY AND OTHER TOP PARTY POSTS TODAY.

ASKED WHETHER THE RETURN OF ENCIK ANWAR AND THE VICTORY OF DATIN PADUKA RAFIDAH WAS A SHOW OF SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, THE UMNO PRESIDENT REPLIED: "I HAVE NO VIEWS. THAT IS WHAT THE PAPERS SAY."

-- MORE 1425/LK

MAHATHIR-COMMENTS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

"HOWEVER I FEEL THEY HAVE WORKED HARD FOR THE PARTY AND THE PEOPLE AND THEY DESERVED TO WIN," SAID THE PRIME MINISTER.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO ADVISED THE LOSERS NOT TO BE DISSAPPOINTED AS THEY COULD STILL WORK FOR THE PARTY.

"IN EVERY CONTEST, SOMEBODY HAS TO WIN AND SOMEBODY HAS TO LOSE. AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, THE WINNER DOES NOT TAKE ALL AND THE LOSER DOES NOT LOSE EVERYTHING."

"OF COURSE, THE WINNER GAINS SOMETHING AND THE LOSER LOSES SOMETHING," HE REPLIED WHEN ASKED ON THE POSITION OF THE LOSERS WHO HAD GONE FOR BROKE IN THE PARTY CONTESTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT THE LOSERS SHOULD ALSO WORK FOR UMNO AS IT DID NOT MATTER WHETHER THEY GET THEIR HEART'S DESIRE OR ANY REWARD.

"THE MAIN THING IS EVERYBODY SHOULD DEDICATE HIMSELF TO THE PARTY. IF ONLY THE WINNER WORKS FOR THE PARTY AND THE LOSER DOES NOT... THIS IS WHAT WE FEAR."

-- MORE 1429/LK

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MAHATHIR-COMMENTS 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MADE IT CLEAR HE DID NOT WANT THE BITTERNESS OF THE CAMPAIGN TO AFFECT THE FUTURE OF THE PARTY, ADDING THAT EVERYONE SHOULD PLACE UMNO FIRST BEFORE SELF.

"TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, ONE MUST HAVE SOME PERSONAL INTERESTS BUT IF YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO OVERRIDE ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, THEN OF COURSE THE PARTY WILL VANISH," HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER FELT THERE SHOULD BE SOME FORM OF INTEGRATION BETWEEN ONE'S SELF-INTEREST WITH THAT OF THE PARTY.

-- MORE 1434/LK

MAHATHIR-COMMENTS 4 KUALA LUMPUR

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT UMNO WOULD CLOSE RANKS, DESPITE THE RIVALRY DURING THE CAMPAIGN, AS HAD BEEN PROVEN BEFORE.

HE SAID DURING THE 1981 PARTY ELECTIONS, THERE WAS A FAIRLY BITTER CONTEST BUT THE UMNO MEMBERS HAD COOPERATED IN ENSURING THE PARTY'S SUCCESS IN THE 1982 GENERAL ELECTIONS WHICH LED TO THE BEST VICTORY EVER IN THE HISTORY OF UMNO.

"WHEN IT COMES TO THE CRUX, THEY (THE UMNO MEMBERS) WILL CLOSE RANKS AND TAKE ON THE OPPOSITION IN ANY ELECTIONS," HE ADDED.

-- BERNAMA 1445/LK