

MAHATHIR - UMNO

BM

(EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AT 11 A.M. TODAY, MAY 25)

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KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 25 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT UMNO WILL BE DESTROYED AND TURNED INTO AN EXCLUSIVE ASSOCIATION FOR THE RICH IF THE PRACTICE OF USING MONEY TO WIN PARTY POSITIONS CONTINUES.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT WAS AFRAID THAT SELFISH DELEGATES WHO WERE WILLING TO EXCHANGE THEIR VOTES FOR MONEY WOULD ONE DAY BE PREPARED TO SELL THE PARTY AND EVEN THE NATION.

HE WAS ALSO UNHAPPY THAT SOME UMNO MEMBERS STILL PRACTISED PAROCHIALISM AND PROMOTED CERTAIN LEADERS TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO SACRIFICE THE PARTY.

HE WAS DELIVERING HIS POLICY SPEECH AT THE 15TH UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE KUALA LUMPUR HILTON.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID UMNO WAS ENTERING A NEW ERA WHERE PERSONAL INTERESTS APPEARED TO TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER THOSE OF THE PARTY. -- 0951/MK

MAHATHIR-UMNO 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

WITH MORE MALAYS BECOMING RICH, PARTY POSTS WERE CONTESTED WITH A LOT OF MONEY SPENT, HE SAID.

THE USE OF MONEY AND THE SCRAMBLE FOR POSTS WOULD DESTROY UMNO AND WEAKEN THE MALAYS, AND THE PARTY WOULD ONE DAY BE LED BY ONLY MILLIONAIRES, HE SAID.

UMNO WOULD THEN NO LONGER BE A POLITICAL PARTY BUT AN ASSOCIATION FOR THE RICH WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: +WHAT HAD GIVEN BIRTH TO UMNO AND GIVEN IT STRENGTH WAS NOT MONEY BUT SPIRIT.+

WHEN UMNO COMPRISED MOSTLY POOR PEOPLE, IT WAS ABLE TO OVERTHROW THE BRITISH. BUT NOW BRANCH MEETINGS WERE DISRUPTED BY QUARRELS WHICH FORCED THE POLICE TO BE CALLED IN, HE SAID.

INCUMBENT LEADERS USED THEIR POWERS TO STOP THE RECRUITMENT OF MEMBERS OR THE SETTING UP OF NEW BRANCHES WHILE THOSE ASPIRING FOR TOP POSTS SPENT MONEY. OTHERS DROPPED NAMES AND TOLD LIES TO GAIN INFLUENCE.

THERE WERE ALSO THOSE WHO ABUSED GOVERNMENTAL POWERS IN THEIR CAMPAIGN TO ACHIEVE THEIR AIMS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HE SAID THAT UMNO MEMBERS WHO ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE TAKEN IN BY SUCH CAMPAIGNING WOULD ONLY HAVE THEMSELVES TO BLAME IF COOPERATION CEASED TO EXIST IN THE PARTY REGARDLESS OF WHO WON IN THE ELECTIONS.

LEADERSHIP OF A DESTROYED UMNO WOULD BE MEANINGLESS BECAUSE VICTORY IN GENERAL ELECTIONS WOULD GO TO OTHER PARTIES, HE ADDED.

SAYING THAT +UMNO WILL NOT LOSE UNLESS IT DEFEATS ITSELF,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD THE STORY OF SEVERAL MEMBERS OF A CLIQUE IN UMNO PUTTING UP AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE TO CONTEST AGAINST THE PARTY'S OFFICIAL CANDIDATE.

-- MORE 1015/LK

MAHATHIR-UMNO 4 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

AFTER THE UMNO CANDIDATE WAS BEATEN, ONE OF THOSE WHO PUT UP THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE WAS CHOSEN TO CONTEST IN ANOTHER ELECTION AND HE WAS CHALLENGED BY AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE PUT UP BY THE DEFEATED UMNO CANDIDATE.

"HE (THE UMNO MEMBER WHO HAD PUT UP THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FOR THE FIRST ELECTION) HIMSELF LOST. THIS CLEARLY SHOWS THAT THOSE WHO PLAY WITH KNIVES WILL ONLY HURT THEMSELVES IN THE END," HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT UMNO MEMBERS, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNGER ONES, SHOULD NOT ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE INFLUENCED BY MONEY POLITICS OR BY THOSE WHO USED GOVERNMENT FACILITIES TO WIN VOTES.

THEY SHOULD CHOOSE CANDIDATES WHO GAVE PRIORITY TO SINCERE SERVICE AND DID NOT GO ALL OUT TO WIN A PLACE IN THE PARTY.

"IF TODAY WE SELL OUR VOTES, ONE DAY WE WILL SELL THE PARTY AND PERHAPS THE NATION AS WELL," HE SAID.

-- MORE 1019/LK

MAHATHIR-UMNO 5 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

"WE MUST NOT ALLOW THE HISTORY OF THE MALAY STATES TO REPEAT ITSELF THROUGH OUR PARTY," HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WANTED THE MEMBERS TO LOVE UMNO AND NOT SPECIFIC PERSONS IN THE PARTY, INCLUDING HIMSELF.

HE SAID IT DID NOT MATTER WHERE THE MEMBERS CAME FROM. WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WAS THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS AND SERVICES TO THE PARTY.

"WHETHER THEY ARE PRINCES OR COMMONERS, TITLED OR OTHERWISE IS NOT IMPORTANT. THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY PERSONALITY CULT OR PAROCHIALISM IN UMNO."

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT WAS ONLY PROPER THAT REPLACEMENTS SHOULD BE FOUND FOR LEADERS WHO DEVIATED FROM POLICY OR NO LONGER HAD NEW IDEAS OR ENERGY.

BUT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THEY SHOULD REPLACE LEADERS JUST BECAUSE THIS WAS PROVIDED FOR OR BECAUSE THEY WANTED THEIR OWN CANDIDATES TO WIN.

-- MORE 1023/LK

ZCZC ND19

MAHATHIR-UMNO 6 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

IF SUCH A PROCESS OF SUCCESSION AFFECTED UMNO ADVERSELY AND SPLIT THE PARTY, IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE MEMBERS TO AVOID PRACTISING DEMOCRACY FOR THE SAKE OF DEMOCRACY, HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT AS A POLITICAL PARTY OF THE MALAYS, UMNO WAS AUTOMATICALLY A PARTY OF MUSLIMS WHICH STRIVED FOR THE CAUSE OF ISLAM.

UMNO WAS NOT A +HYPOCRITE+ WHICH DENIED THAT IT WAS A MALAY PARTY, AS WAS THE CASE WITH ANOTHER PARTY.

BECAUSE THE MALAYS WERE RELATIVELY POOR AND WEAK, UMNO WAS ALSO A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POOR AND WEAK, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

EVEN SO, THE MALAYS HAD BEEN ABLE TO HOLD POLITICAL POWER AND THIS HAD EARNED THEM THE HATRED OF CERTAIN GROUPS BOTH IN THE COUNTRY AND ABROAD.

-- MORE 1027/LK

MAHATHIR-UMNO 7 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

THIS, HE SAID, WAS WHY THE MALAYS HAD NOT SINCE INDEPENDENCE GAINED SYMPATHY AND MALAYSIA HAD BEEN THE TARGET OF LIES AND ACCUSATIONS.

HE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THAT UMNO WAS THE MAIN TARGET OF ALL OPPOSITION EFFORTS TO KEEP THE MALAYS DOWN SO THAT THEY COULD NOT USE THEIR POLITICAL POWER TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

THERE WAS NO MORE EFFECTIVE WAY FOR THE OPPOSITION TO DO THIS THAN BY SETTING MALAYS AGAINST MALAYS.

THE SETTING UP OF PAS WAS ONE STRATEGY USED BY ENEMIES OF THE MALAYS, BUT, UNFORTUNATELY FOR THESE PEOPLE, THE MALAYS WERE WISE TO THEIR MOVE AND CONTINUED TO SUPPORT UMNO, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT ENEMY EFFORTS WERE NOW DIRECTED AT WEAKENING MALAY NATIONALISM BY CLAIMING THAT ISLAM WAS AGAINST NATIONALISM.

-- MORE 1031/LK

ZCZC NO21

MAHATHIR-UMNO 8 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

HE SAID THERE WERE MUSLIMS WHO REJECTED MALAY NATIONALISM BUT WERE NOT WILLING TO DEFEND THE CAUSE OF THEIR CO-RELIGIONISTS IN AFGHANISTAN, LEBANON AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

THEIR +MUSLIMNESS+ WAS CONFINED TO ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRY WHERE THEY WERE PROTECTED BY UMNO'S MALAY NATIONALISM, HE SAID.

HE SAID THESE PEOPLE WERE HYPOCRITES OR +DOUBLE-FACED.+

HE SAID THAT THEY WERE +THORNS IN THE FLESH+ AND UMNO SHOULD NOT ONLY EXPOSE THEIR ACTIVITIES BUT ALSO OPPOSE THEM TOTALLY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT ALTHOUGH UMNO FOUGHT FOR MALAY INTERESTS, IT HAD NO DESIRE TO SEIZE THE RIGHTS OR THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS WHICH WAS HONESTLY GAINED.

-- MORE 1034/LK

ZCZC NO22

MAHATHIR-UMNO 9 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

ISLAM, THE COUNTRY'S OFFICIAL RELIGION AND THE FAITH OF UMNO MEMBERS, FORBODE THE SEIZURE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S PROPERTY, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT UMNO, IN ITS STRUGGLES, MUST ALSO CONSIDER THE INTERESTS OF THE OTHER RACES IN MALAYSIA.

THE PARTY NEEDED THE COOPERATION OF THE VARIOUS RACES TO BRING ABOUT JUSTICE IN ALL FIELDS.

WHILE UMNO COOPERATED WITH THE OTHER COMMUNITIES AND HELPED THEM, THEY MUST IN TURN DO THEIR PART TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND RELATED ACTIONS TO ERADICATE THE ECONOMIC IMBALANCE BETWEEN BUMIPUTERAS AND NON-BUMIPUTERAS.

THEY COULD DO THIS BY HAVING MEANINGFUL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP WITH BUMIPUTERAS AND HELP THEIR BUMIPUTERA COLLEAGUES AND EMPLOYEES ACQUIRE SKILLS.

-- MORE 1037/LK

ZCZC NO23

MAHATHIR-UMNO 10 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR THANKED UMNO DIVISIONS FOR RETURNING HIM UNOPPOSED AS THE PARTY PRESIDENT.

HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAD OFTEN MADE UNPOPULAR CALLS SINCE TAKING OVER THE HELM OF THE PARTY, THE MAJORITY OF THE DIVISIONS HAD DEMONSTRATED THEIR CONFIDENCE IN HIM TO CONTINUE TO LEAD THE PARTY.

HE SAID THAT HE WOULD SERVE UMNO FOR AS LONG AS HE WAS ABLE TO.

"WHAT I ASK OF GOD IS THAT WHEN MY SERVICE IS NO LONGER NEEDED, I WILL REALISE IT, WILL RECOGNISE THE SIGNS SO THAT I CAN GLADLY WITHDRAW," HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS NOT IMPORTANT, BUT UMNO WAS.

-- BERNAMA 1040/LK