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MAHATHIR-UMNO
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KUALA LUMPUR, DEC. 6 (BERNAMA) -- (DATUKERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD)
TODAY PERFORMED THE TOPPING UP OF THE NEW UMNO BUILDING, HERE,
DESCRIBING THE COMPLEX AS A SYMBOL OF SUCCESS OF THE MALAYS AND
BUMIPUTERAS.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT SAID THE COMPLEX WAS A
PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF THE PARTY'S STRUGGLE THUS FAR IN ENSURING
THAT THE MALAYS ATTAINED AN APPROPRIATE POSITION, PARTICULARLY IN
THE ECONOMIC SECTOR.

+IT IS AS A RESULT OF UMNO'S STRUGGLE THAT THE POSITION OF THE
MALAYS HAS BEEN ENHANCED AND THEY ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN BUSINESS
PREMISES AND OWN LARGE AND ATTRACTIVE BUILDINGS IN THIS CITY AS WELL
AS IN OTHER TOWNS IN THE COUNTRY.

+IN THE PAST, NOT ONLY WERE THERE NO MALAY-OWNED SHOPS IN KUALA
LUMPUR BUT THE NUMBER OF MALAYS LIVING HERE WAS ALSO SMALL.

+I CAN STILL REMEMBER THE FIRST UMNO CONVENTION AT THE SELANGOR
CLUB... THE MALAYS WHO WERE ATTIRED IN THEIR TRADITIONAL DRESS AT
THE FUNCTION WERE THE OBJECTS OF INTEREST, HE SAID.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK HUSA HITAM AND OTHER UMNO AND
BARISAN NASIONAL LEADERS WERE PRESENT AT THE CEREMONY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN TO
BUMIPUTERAS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ECONOMY WOULD ENSURE THAT THEY
OCCUPIED POSITIONS THAT WERE ON PAR WITH THOSE OF THE OTHER
COMMUNITIES, APART FROM STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH THEM.

+WE DO NOT WANT MALAYS TO DOMINATE ALL SECTORS BUT TO BE ON PAR
WITH THE OTHER COMMUNITIES.

*THIS IS THE STRUGGLE OF UMNO, HE ADDED,

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE UMNO COMPLEX, WHICH HE
DESCRIBED AS AMONG THE BIGGEST AND MOST ATTRACTIVE BUILDING IN THE
COUNTRY, DID NOT INDICATE THAT UMNO HAD BECOME A COMMERCIAL PARTY.

HE SAID THE BUILDING WOULD BE A SOURCE OF INCOME FOR THE PARTY'S
POLITICAL EXPENDITURE WHICH HAD RISEN.

+AS A POLITICAL BODY, WE DO NOT WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN
BUSINESS. WE WANT TO MAKE THE BUILDING A SOURCE OF INCOME FOR THE
PARTY AND TO REPAY THE LOAN OBTAINED TO BUILD THE COMPLEX, HE SAID.

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE INCOME FROM THE BUILDING WOULD BE USED TO
MEET EXPENSES INCURRED BY UMNO HEADQUARTERS.

UMNO DIVISIONS AND OFFICES IN THE STATES SHOULD OBTAIN THEIR
INCOME THROUGH THEIR OWN BUILDINGS, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR APPEALED TO UMNO MEMBERS TO HELP THE
PARTY REPAY THE LOAN.

EARLIER, TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH, IN
HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE UMNO BUILDING COMMITTEE, SAID 70 PER
CENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COMPLEX, WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO COST
MORE THAN \$400 MILLION, HAD BEEN COMPLETED ACCORDING TO
SCHEDULE.

CONSTRUCTION WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY SEPT. 30 NEXT YEAR,
ACCORDING TO THE SCHEDULED PLAN OF CONSTRUCTION OF 34 MONTHS.

THE COMPLEX WILL HOUSE THE UMNO HEADQUARTERS AT THE DATUK ONN
TOWER, THE PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE AND CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION
FACILITIES.

THE CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION FACILITIES ARE AMONG THE MOST
MODERN IN THE WORLD. HALLS OF VARYING SIZES CAN ACCOMMODATE UP TO
6,500 PEOPLE AT ANY ONE TIME.

THE EXHIBITION HALL, NAMED THE TUN RAZAK EXHIBITION HALL, IS
15,251 SQ METRES AND THE BIGGEST IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

THE PLENARY HALL, NAMED THE DEWAN MERDEKA, WILL BE THE VENUE OF
THE PARTY'S GENERAL ASSEMBLIES. THE TOWER BLOCK WILL BE RENTED OUT
TO SELECTED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, INTERNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND
BUSINESS HOUSES. -- BERNAMA

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