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MAHATHIR-UMNO
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ALOR SETAR, MARCH 29 (BERNAMA) -- UMNO BRANCHES HAVE BEEN URGED TO LOOK FOR NEW MEMBERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS AND TO INSTIL IN THEM THE SPIRIT OF UMNO'S STRUGGLE TO ENSURE THE PARTY'S CONTINUED STRENGTH.

IN MAKING THE CALL, PARTY PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID IT WOULD BE MEANINGLESS TO GET NEW MEMBERS SOLELY TO INCREASE PARTY MEMBERSHIP.

UMNO NEEDED PEOPLE WHO WERE SPIRITED AND COMMITTED TO THE PARTY'S CAUSE, HE SAID.

+UMNO SHOULD INCREASE ITS MEMBERSHIP TO FIGHT FOR THE INTERESTS OF THE MALAYS, ISLAM AND THE NATION,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID DURING A DIALOGUE WITH 500 KEDAH UMNO LEADERS AT BANGUNAN TUNKU HERE YESTERDAY.

HE SAID HE WAS VISITING THE VARIOUS STATES NOT BECAUSE OF THE ELECTIONS BUT RATHER TO MEET PARTY MEMBERS AND TO GET TO KNOW THEIR PROBLEMS. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 2 ALOR SETAR

UMNO NEEDED MEMBERS WHO UNDERSTOOD PARTY POLICY AND NOT MERE FOLLOWERS WHO COULD BE BOUGHT AND BRIBED.

HE WAS CONCERNED OVER THE DECLINE IN THE SPIRIT OF UMNO MEMBERS VIS-A-VIS PAS SUPPORTERS AS WAS EVIDENT FROM THE POOR ATTENDANCE AT UMNO COURSES AND GATHERINGS LATELY.

WHEN PAS LEADERS HELD CERAMAHS (POLITICAL LECTURES) MANY OF THEIR MEMBERS TURNED UP EVEN FROM FAR OFF PLACES AND AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

+ATTENDANCE AT UMNO GATHERINGS AND COURSES IS NOT SATISFACTORY EVEN WHEN REFRESHMENTS AND RICE ARE SERVED,+ THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID UMNO MUST STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION FOR HISTORY HAD PROVED THAT A DEFEATED PARTY WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO REGAIN POWER. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 3 ALOR SETAR

FOR INSTANCE, PAS, WHICH RULED KELANTAN FOR 18 YEARS, WOULD FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO REGAIN POWER IN THE STATE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

+THE UMNO VICTORY IN THE KELANTAN STATE ELECTIONS WAS NOT SOLELY BECAUSE OF UMNO'S STRENGTH BUT WAS ALSO DUE TO THE DISUNITY WITHIN PAS.+

HE URGED UMNO MEMBERS TO REKINDLE THEIR FIGHTING SPIRIT AND SET ASIDE PERSONAL FEELINGS IN THE INTEREST OF THE MALAYS AS A WHOLE.

ONLY UMNO COULD SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THE MALAYS AND NOT OPPOSITION PARTIES LIKE PAS OR PARTI SOCIALIS RAKYAT (PSRM) FOR UMNO WAS FAIR AND MODERATE.

UMNO HAD BEEN POWER FOR A LONG TIME BECAUSE OF THE DISCIPLINE AMONG PARTY MEMBERS WHO ALWAYS ADHERED TO THEIR LEADERS' WISHES, HE SAID. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 4 ALOR SETAR

BEING DISCIPLINED AND OBEYING THE LEADERS WAS IMPORTANT BECAUSE AT TIMES NOT ALL GOVERNMENT OR PARTY MATTERS COULD BE DISCUSSED WITH MEMBERS .

CERTAIN THINGS COULD ONLY BE DISCUSSED AMONG A FEW LEADERS UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

+WITHOUT THE CONFIDENCE OF PARTY MEMBERS IN THEIR LEADERS, UMNO WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DISCHARGE ITS DUTIES EFFECTIVELY,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HE ALSO EXPRESSED SASTIFACTION OVER THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN KEDAH ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE OF MENTERI BESAR. -- BERNAMA
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