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MAHATHIR-STRIKE

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 29 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT CAN ACT AGAINST CUEPACS IF IN THE PROCESS OF CARRYING OUT ITS PROPOSED STRIKE, THERE IS CIVIL DISORDER AND BREAKDOWN OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT AS SUCH, CUEPACS SHOULD GO ABOUT THE MATTER VERY CAREFULLY SO THAT IT DID NOT EXCEED THE LIMITS OF THE LAW.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER THE END OF THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHICH STARTED ON FRIDAY AND CONCLUDED WITH A SPECIAL SITTING TODAY, HE SAID CUEPACS'S INTENTION TO GO ON STRIKE WOULD DISRUPT THE ECONOMIC STABILITY OF THE COUNTRY.

HE SAID THAT IF A SMALL UNION THREATENED TO GO ON STRIKE, THE EFFECT WOULD NOT BE THAT BAD, BUT CUEPACS REPRESENTED PRACTICALLY THE WHOLE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT AS IT IS, CERTAIN QUARTERS HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO WONDER WHETHER THE COUNTRY WAS ECONOMICALLY STABLE.

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT TAKE ANY ACTION AGAINST CUEPACS IF IT WENT ON STRIKE WITHOUT BREAKING THE LAW.

HE SAID THAT IF CUEPACS WANTED TO DESTROY THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY, +SO LONG AS THEY DO IT LEGALLY WE CANNOT DO ANYTHING.+

+THAT IS WHERE THE GOVERNMENT IS PARALYSED,+ HE ADDED.

HE REITERATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ENTER INTO ANY NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE SALARY REVISION ISSUE UNTIL CUEPACS WITHDREW ALL THREATS.

ON PAS' SUPPORT FOR HIS STAND ON THE ISSUE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS GLAD BUT ADDED THAT THE STAND SHOULD ALSO BE SUPPORTED BY TRADE UNIONS. -- MORE

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ON MTUC DEPUTY PRESIDENT ENCIK ZAINAL RAMPAK'S STATEMENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS A +COLD+ EMPLOYER, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IN THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION, A COLD EMPLOYER WOULD HAVE RETRENCHED REDUNDANT STAFF.

BUT THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT DO THIS AND IN FACT PROVIDED BETTER SALARY SCHEMES FOR THE LOWER INCOME WORKERS COMPARED WITH WHAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAD, HE SAID. -- BERNAMA

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