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KUALA TERENGGANU, OCT 31 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE COUNTRY NEEDED THE OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT AND THE STATE ASSEMBLIES BUT IT COULD DO WITHOUT THE LIKES OF PAS WHOSE EXISTENCE HE ADDED COULD LEAD TO A DIVIDED MUSLIM COMMUNITY.

AS SUCH, HE SAID, IT WAS INCUMBENT UPON UMNO AND BARISAN NASIONAL MEMBERS TO STEP UP THEIR EFFORTS TO PUT PAS OUT OF ACTION.

THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT FEAR FACING THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, AND WAS EVER READY TO CONTEST AGAINST THEM, BUT IT WAS NOT PREPARED TO SEE PARTIES WHOSE LEADERS USED RELIGION TO UNDERMINE THE FAITH OF THE MUSLIMS SOLELY FOR THEIR PERSONAL MOTIVES, HE SAID.

IT WAS HIS HOPE TO HAVE A HEALTHY OPPOSITION THAT WOULD POINT OUT THE GOVERNMENT'S MISTAKES, HE SAID AT A TERENGGANU BN THANKSGIVING AT THE STATE STADIUM HERE.

ABOUT 5,000 BN LEADERS AND MEMBERS WERE PRESENT, INCLUDING MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI HAJI WAN MOKHTAR AHMAD AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER AND UMNO SECRETARY-GENERAL DATUK SERI SANUSI JUNID. -- MORE  
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#### MAHATHIR-PAS 2 KUALA TERENGGANU

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO ARRIVED EARLIER IN THE DAY FOR A TWO-DAY VISIT TO THE STATE AS PART OF HIS NATIONWIDE TOUR, SAID PAS WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES.

+ITS EXISTENCE HAS BEEN DETRIMENTAL TO THE RELIGIOUS FAITH OF MUSLIMS WHILE ITS LEADERS ARE WILLING TO DO ANYTHING TO GAIN POWER,+ HE SAID.

HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT PAS, SUPPORTED BY MUSLIMS, HAD CAUSED ENMITY AMONG MUSLIMS.

PAS LEADERS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN UPHOLDING THE CAUSE OF THE RELIGION AND NATION BUT SERVED ONLY THEIR OWN MOTIVES, EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF DECEIVING THEIR OWN SUPPORTERS.

HE SAID THE LEADERS HAD COLLECTED MONEY FROM THEIR SUPPORTERS DURING THE CAMPAIGN LEADING UP TO THE AUGUST GENERAL ELECTION PURPORTEDLY FOR PASSAGE TO THE HOLY LAND TO PERFORM THE PILGRIMAGE.

+THE LOYAL SUPPORTERS WHO WANTED TO PERFORM THE HAJ HAVE REALISED THEY WERE DECEIVED AND THEIR MONEY WAS USED BY THE LEADERS FOR THE ELECTION,+ HE SAID. -- MORE  
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#### MAHATHIR-PAS 3 KUALA TERENGGANU

AS SUCH, UMNO AND THE BN MUST DRAW UP STRATEGIES AND FURTHER STRENGTHEN COOPERATION TO WIPE OUT SUCH AN UNHEALTHY PARTY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, ASKED UMNO MEMBERS TO RECRUIT AS MANY PEOPLE INTO THE PARTY AS POSSIBLE AND STEP UP INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS TO EXPLAIN THE PARTY STRUGGLE TO EVERY LEVEL OF SOCIETY.

ALTHOUGH THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION WAS FIVE YEARS AWAY, UMNO AND BN MEMBERS MUST NOT RELAX BUT MUST MAKE PREPARATIONS NOW, HE SAID.

HE WAS GLAD TO NOTE TERENGGANU UMNO AND BN HAD MADE A CLEAN SWEEP OF ALL THE EIGHT PARLIAMENTARY AND TAKEN 30 OF THE 32 STATE SEATS.

THIS SHOWED THE PEOPLE'S TRUST IN THE SINCERE STRUGGLE OF UMNO AND THE BN, UNLIKE PAS WHICH SHOWED ARROGANCE BEFORE POLLING DAY BY ACTING AS IF IT HAD ALREADY CAPTURED THE STATE, HE SAID.

IN THIS CONNECTION, HE ADVISED UMNO AND BN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AGAINST BEING ARROGANT ABOUT THEIR SUCCESS AS THEY HELD THE PEOPLE'S TRUST.

HE WARNED THAT THOSE SHIRKING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD FIND THEMSELVES OUT IN THE COLD IN THE NEXT ELECTION. -- BERNAMA  
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