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MAHATHIR-FREEDOM
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, NOV 16, ⁸⁶ (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY REMINDED ALL QUARTERS IN THE NATION TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN UPHOLDING DEMOCRATIC FREEDOM, PARTICULARLY IN RESOLVING SENSITIVE PROBLEMS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN MALAYSIA WAS SPECIAL AND UNLIKE THAT OF DEVELOPED NATIONS SUCH AS THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE, ADDING THAT PRACTISE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE COUNTRY SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO GET +CARRIED AWAY+ BY THE CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM BUT SHOULD BE SUITED TO PREVAILING CONDITIONS.

HE SAID MANY SENSITIVE ISSUES IN MALAYSIA NEEDED TO BE TACKLED DIPLOMATICALLY THROUGH ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES AND CHANNELS TO PREVENT PROBLEMS CROPPING UP IN THE MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY.

OPENING THE MCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE, HE WARNED THAT PROBLEMS USUALLY PERSEVERED AND IN FACT WORSENERD IN COUNTRIES THAT TRIED TO RESOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS THROUGH EMOTIONALISM AND FEELINGS.

THE BARISAN NASIONAL CHAIRMAN ALSO SAID THE PROBLEM CURRENTLY BESETTING THE COUNTRY TODAY WAS ACTUALLY ECONOMIC RECESSION AND THE SITUATION SHOULD SERVE AS A LESSON TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY. -- MORE

1454MST 16 11 86

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MAHATHIR-FREEDOM 2 KUALA LUMPUR (CORRECTED REPETITION)

PRESENT AT THE OPENING WERE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GHAFAR BABA, GERAKAN PRESIDENT DATUK DR LIM KENG YAIK, DEPUTY MIC PRESIDENT DATUK S.SUBRAMANIAM AND OTHER BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTY REPRESENTATIVES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THE BN GOVERNMENT'S OWN FORUM, PROCEDURES AND CHANNELS TO RESOLVE SENSITIVE ISSUES HAD SO FAR MANAGED TO OVERCOME VARIOUS PROBLEMS.

HE SAID RACIAL ISSUES FREQUENTLY PROVOKED FEELINGS AND BY AIRING THEM AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE INSTEAD OF IN PUBLIC PLACES AND ROADSIDES, MANY SUCH PROBLEMS HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED.

ON THE RECENT PRIBUMI (INDIGENOUS) ISSUE, HE SAID THE STATUS OF ANY PERSON SHOULD NO LONGER BE QUESTIONED AFTER THE ISSUE HAD BEEN RESOLVED THROUGH DISCUSSION.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID: +WE KNOW THAT THE CHINESE AND THE INDIANS ARE NOT IMMIGRANTS AND THEY SHARE THE SAME RIGHTS WITH OTHER RACES. THE MALAYS AND OTHER BUMIPUTERAS, IN THE CONTEXT OF HISTORY, ARE THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.+

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID ALTHOUGH THE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN WAS NOT THE COUNTRY'S DOING, STEPS SHOULD STILL BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE ITS ECONOMY, DISCLOSING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD CHANGED SEVERAL POLICIES FOR THIS PURPOSE. -- MORE (ENDS CORRECTED REPETITION)

1654MST 16 11 86

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MAHATHIR-FREEDOM 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT SUCH EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE FUTILE IF THE PEOPLE WERE NOT WILLING TO FACE CHALLENGES BY STEPPING UP PRODUCTIVITY AND REFRAINING FROM TAKING ANY ACTION THAT COULD WORSEN THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION.

WEAKNESSES AND DISHONEST ACTIONS HAD BEEN REVEALED DURING THE RECESSIONARY PERIOD AND THE PEOPLE SHOULD LEARN FROM THESE TO HAVE A MORE HEALTHY CONDUCT OF ECONOMIC PRACTICES.

REFERRING TO MALPRACTICES IN COOPERATIVES, HE SAID: +WE MUST BE CAREFUL WHEN PLACING CONFIDENCE IN ANY MANAGEMENT.

+WE MUST HAVE REGULATIONS WHICH WE MUST REVIEW FREQUENTLY. WE SHOULD NOT BE SO CARRIED AWAY BY THE THOUGHT OF GAINING A BIG PROFIT IN A SHORT TIME THAT WE BECOME GULLIBLE TO THE SWEET WORDS OF CERTAIN PEOPLE.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MANY PEOPLE WERE STILL WILLING TO BE CHIT-FUND CONTRIBUTORS EVEN THOUGH A LOT OF PEOPLE HAD BEEN CHEATED IN THIS WAY. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-FREEDOM 4 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID THERE WAS NO EASY WAY OF MAKING MONEY AS PROFITS COULD ONLY BE MADE THROUGH TRADE, AND PRODUCTION AND SALE OF VIABLE GOODS.

+SHARE TRANSFERS, INCREASE IN PROPERTY VALUE, LISTING IN THE STOCK EXCHANGE AS WELL AS SHARE AND COMMODITY SPECULATIONS ARE NO GUARANTEE OF SUCCESS,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION, A NEW BREED OF PROFESSIONAL, ETHICAL AND TRUSTWORTHY MANAGERS WHO WERE NOT GREEDY WERE NEEDED.

+THOSE HAVING THEIR OWN COMPANIES SHOULD NOT MANAGE PUBLIC COMPANIES WITH RELATED INTERESTS. IN OTHER WORDS, WE WISH TO SEE A NEW CODE OF ETHICS AMONG MALAYSIAN COMPANY MANAGERS.+

HE SAID THE COUNTRY HAD SHOWN SIGNS OF ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT BUT THERE WERE ALWAYS OTHER MATTERS THAT IMPAIRED ITS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLIMATE.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID CERTAIN QUARTERS WERE TOO CARRIED AWAY WITH DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES TO THE POINT WHERE THEY NO LONGER CARED IF THESE PROCESSES BENEFITTED OR HARMED THE NATION. -- BERNAMA
1609MST 16 11 86