

PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR (BMF)

BM

86

(P)

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 19 (BERNAMA) -- THE PRIME MINISTER SAID TODAY IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO SET UP A ROYAL COMMISSION OR A SPECIAL PROSECUTION TEAM TO PROBE THE BMF SCANDAL AS SUGGESTED AS IT IS FEARED SUCH A MOVE WILL ONLY CONTINUE A +WITCH HUNT+ THAT HAS SPECIFIC MOTIVES.

HE TOLD THE DEWAN RAKYAT THE MONEY LOST WOULD NOT BE RECOVERED THROUGH SUCH A +WITCH HUNT+, WHOSE FUSS AND FANFARE WOULD ONLY AFFECT THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE AND THE WORLD IN MALAYSIA'S BANKS AND ECONOMY.

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED DURING THE DEBATE ON THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE ROYAL ADDRESS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD ALSO POINTED OUT THAT BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN INVESTMENTS WOULD SLOW DOWN AND RECOVERY OF THE DEPRESSED NATIONAL ECONOMY MADE MORE DIFFICULT IF THIS HAPPENED.

HE SAID THE SUGGESTION TO APPOINT A ROYAL COMMISSION SEEMED TO REFLECT A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE BUMIPUTRA MALAYSIA FINANCE (BMF) LOANS SCANDAL REPORT TABLED IN PARLIAMENT, OR IN THE GOVERNMENT AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROSECUTING CRIMES IN THE COUNTRY.

ACCORDING TO HIM, THE AHMAD NOORDIN COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO THE AFFAIR HAD PROBED BEYOND ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE AND HE STRESSED THAT IF A ROYAL COMMISSION WAS PROTECTED FROM ANY LEGAL ACTION ARISING FROM ITS WORK, THE COMMITTEE WAS SIMILARLY PROTECTED. -- MORE  
2318MST 19 03 86

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B E463 AAE

PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR (BMF) 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS NOT TRUE THAT THE COMMITTEE WAS NOT PROTECTED AND ANYONE BOLD ENOUGH TO TAKE OUT A SUMMONS AGAINST IT WOULD BE QUESTIONED CLOSELY IN THE COURT UNTIL MORE SINS WERE EXPOSED.

+THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INTEND TO ALLOW THOSE WHO HAD ROBBED THE COUNTRY'S MONEY TO GET AWAY SCOT-FREE, AND ALL THE NECESSARY ACTIONS HAD BEEN AND WOULD BE TAKEN.

+HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH WE WISH TO PUNISH THE CULPRITS, WE SHOULD NOT PROSECUTE JUST ANYBODY MERELY TO SATISFY OUR FEELINGS OF ANGER.

+EACH ACCUSATION MUST BE CLOSELY INVESTIGATED SO THAT NO INNOCENT PERSON WOULD SUFFER JUST TO APPEASE CERTAIN PEOPLE.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY'S REPORT WAS NOT A POLICE INVESTIGATION PAPER BECAUSE IT WAS NOT THE POLICE AND ITS INVESTIGATION NOT COMPLETE AND CAREFUL ENOUGH.

THIS WAS WHY LETTERS CONTAINING FORGED SIGNATURES WERE ACCEPTED UNQUESTIONINGLY AS VALID EXHIBITS, ACCOMPANIED BY ACCUSATIONS. THE SAME WENT FOR DIARY NOTATIONS AND PERSONAL LETTERS.

+IT APPEARS THAT ANY MENTION OF A NAME TO THE INQUIRY COMMITTEE IS GOOD ENOUGH TO ESTABLISH GUILT, AND IF THIS IS TO BE THE BASIS OF JUSTICE, ANYONE WITH A GRUDGE NEEDS ONLY TO GIVE THE NAME THE PERSON HE HATES IN RELATION TO A CRIME, AND THIS PERSON WOULD BE PROSECUTED AND PUNISHED,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

2141MST 19 03 86

U E453 AAE  
PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR (BMF) 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS INCUMBENT UPON THE QUARTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROSECUTION, THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND THE POLICE, TO INVESTIGATE CAREFULLY FIRST BEFORE PROSECUTING ANYONE.

+THERE IS THEREFORE NO REASON TO HAVE A SPECIAL PROSECUTION TEAM, UNLESS WE WISH TO SET ASIDE THE NORMAL PROCESSES AND REPLACE THEM WITH A KANGAROO COURT AS DONE BY SEVERAL COMMUNIST COUNTRIES AND DICTATORSHIPS,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE BMF OFFENCES OCCURRED IN HONG KONG AND THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NO JURISDICTION THERE. WHAT COULD BE DONE WAS TO COOPERATE WITH THAT COUNTRY AND WHERE +WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE ACTION, WE WILL DO SO.+

HE SAID EFFORTS TO KEEP THE PUBLICITY ON THE BMF AFFAIR GOING PURPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF OUTRAGE WOULD NOT BRING ANY GOOD TO THE COUNTRY.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WAS TO TAKE ACTION TO PROSECUTE THE CULPRITS AND IF POSSIBLE, RECOVER SOME OF THE MONEY THAT HAD BEEN LOST.

+ALL THESE ARE BEING HANDLED BY BANK BUMIPUTRA (BMF'S PARENT BANK) AND IF THE OPPOSITION HAVE ANY USEFUL INFORMATION, THEY CAN TURN IT OVER TO THE QUARTERS RESPONSIBLE, BUT IF ANY GENERAL ACCUSATION IS MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF GETTING PUBLICITY, THE GOVERNMENT WILL REGARD IT AS A POLITICAL GIMMICK AND WILL NOT ENTERTAIN IT.+ -- MORE  
2107MST 19 03 86

D893

B E473 AAE  
PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR (BMF) 4 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR THANKED AUDITOR-GENERAL TAN SIR AHMAD NOORDIN ZAKARIA AND HIS COMMITTEE AND SAID NO ONE COULD DENY THE REPORT WAS COMPREHENSIVE AND USEFUL.

HE SAID THE EXPOSURE OF THE WRONGDOINGS AND FRAUD COMMITTED BY CERTAIN PEOPLE WAS THE RESULT OF THE COMMENDABLE EFFORT.

+IF NOT FOR THE VARIOUS JIBES AGAINST PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT DEFEND THEMSELVES AND THE PENCHANT FOR PUBLICITY, THE REPORT COULD HAVE BEEN A CLASSICAL WORK WITHOUT PEER,+ HE ADDED.

HE ALSO RESPONDED TO A COMMENT MADE BY ENCIK OTHMAN ABDUL (BN-ULU MUDA) AND CLARIFIED THAT THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION EMPOWERED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL TO ACT FREELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF THE LAW WITHOUT HAVING TO REFER TO OR CONSULT THE PRIME MINISTER OR THE CABINET.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S RESPONSIBILITY IN PROSECUTING WAS OUTLINED BY ARTICLE 145(3) OF THE CONSTITUTION WHERE THE PROVISION ENABLED HIM TO USE HIS DISCRETION TO INITIATE, CARRY OUT OR REPLACE ANY CRIMINAL PROCEEDING.

ENCIK OTHMAN HAD MADE A STATEMENT THAT IMPLIED THE AG, IN TAKING ACTION TO PROSECUTE, WAS ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET AND IN HIS UNDERSTANDING, NEEDED TO REFER TO AND CONSULT WITH THEM BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION. -- MORE

2204MST 19 03 86

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B E480 AAE

PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR (BMF) 5 KUALA LUMPUR

DURING HIS SPEECH, HE WAS INTERRUPTED SEVERAL TIMES BY OPPOSITION LEADER LIM KIT SIANG (DAP-KOTA MELAKA) WHO ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT HAD SUBMITTED THE BMF FINAL REPORT TO THE POLICE FOR ACTION.

THE PRIME MINISTER REPLIED THAT ALL ACTIONS HAD BEEN AND WERE BEING TAKEN TO BRING THE OFFENDERS TO BOOK AND IF THE OPPOSITION BELIEVED OTHERWISE, THEY HAD BEEN GIVEN THE WRONG INFORMATION.

HE SAID THE FINAL REPORT HAD BEEN MADE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC, INCLUDING THE POLICE. THE GOVERNMENT AND BANK BUMIPUTRA WOULD TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION AND THE OPPOSITION DID NOT REALLY KNOW WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OR THE BANK HAD TURNED OVER THE REPORT TO THE POLICE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR THEN ASKED ENCIK LIM WHETHER HE WAS SATISFIED WITH THE REPLY, AND ENCIK LIM STOOD AND ASKED FOR WHAT HE CALLED A CLEARER AND LESS AMBIGUOUS ANSWER.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE BMF FINAL REPORT WAS NOT A NOVEL, IT NEEDED CAREFUL STUDY AND THE BANK HAD TO GO THROUGH IT WITH GREAT CARE AND IN DETAIL AND THIS WOULD TAKE TIME. -- MORE  
2218MST 19 03 86

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B E482 AAE

PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR (BMF) 6 KUALA LUMPUR

HE STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NEVER ALLOW THE CULPRITS TO ESCAPE AND SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTIES DIFFERED FROM THOSE OF THE OPPOSITION.

ENCIK LIM THEN CLAIMED THAT CORRUPTION WAS RIFE IN THE COUNTRY DESPITE THE GOVERNMENT'S CLEAN, EFFICIENT AND TRUSTWORTHY SLOGAN.

HE ALSO SAID THE 2M (MAHATHIR-MUSA) ADMINISTRATION WAS NOW THE 1M ADMINISTRATION. (DATUK MUSA HITAM RESIGNED AS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER RECENTLY).

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE OPPOSITION COULD USE CORRUPTION AS AN ELECTION ISSUE BUT IT WAS STILL LEFT TO BE SEEN WHETHER THIS WOULD WORK FOR THEM. -- BERNAMA

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