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MAHATHIR-MUSA

IPOH, MARCH 15, (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT DATUK MUSA HITAM'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW HIS RESIGNATION FROM THE UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT'S POST BUT NOT HIS CABINET POSTS WILL NOT AFFECT THE PARTY'S UNITY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID HE DID NOT THINK THAT DATUK MUSA'S DECISION WOULD HAVE ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE PARTY.

+RIGHT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, AS FAR AS I CAN DIG OUT WITH ALL THE TELEGRAMS I HAVE RECEIVED AND ALL THE STATEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE, THERE WILL BE PARTY UNITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL (MKT) AS WELL AS THE (PARTY) PRESIDENT,+ HE TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AT THE AIRPORT HERE BEFORE LEAVING FOR TROLAK.

HE SAID THAT THERE WAS +NO QUESTION AT ALL+ ABOUT PARTY UNITY AND EVEN THE JOHOR UMNO HAD NOT WITHDRAWN SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY PRESIDENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A LETTER FROM DATUK MUSA REGARDING DATUK MUSA'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW HIS RESIGNATION AS THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE PARTY. -- MORE  
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HE SAID THAT THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL WOULD MAKE A DECISION ON +THIS DEVELOPMENT+ AT A MEETING THAT HE WOULD FIX A DATE FOR LATER.

ASKED WHETHER DATUK MUSA'S LETTER WAS ACCEPTABLE TO HIM, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID, +IT IS UP TO THE MKT TO DECIDE ON THIS THING, I DID NOT MAKE ANY DECISION ON THIS EXCEPT AS A COLLECTIVE MEMBER OF THE MKT+.

TO ANOTHER QUESTION WHETHER HE PREFERRED THE SUPREME COUNCIL TO DISCUSS THE MATTER, HE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF PREFERENCE BUT THE QUESTION OF THE RIGHT OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL TO DISCUSS IT.

+WE DON'T MAKE INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS, WE MAKE COLLECTIVE DECISIONS,+ HE ADDED.

ON WHETHER HE HAD ANYONE IN MIND FOR THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER'S POST, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, +IT IS A \$64,000 QUESTION, I DON'T ANSWER SUCH QUESTIONS.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT ALTHOUGH IT HAD BEEN A CUSTOM IN UMNO THAT A DEPUTY PARTY PRESIDENT WAS MADE THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, IT WAS NOT A RULE.

HE SAID THAT IF DATUK MUSA DID NOT WANT TO BECOME DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, IT WOULD NOT POSE A PROBLEM. -- MORE  
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ON HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO PERAK, THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE WAS VERY HAPPY WITH IT, ESPECIALLY WITH THE TURNOUT OF THE PEOPLE.

THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT SHOWN BY THE PEOPLE TO THE GOVERNMENT PROVED THAT ALL THE ATTEMPTS TO SMEAR THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT AFFECTED THE RAKYAT AT ALL.

HE SAID THAT THIS REFLECTED THAT THE PEOPLE WERE NOT AT ALL BEING INFLUENCED BY ALL KINDS OF WILD ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. -- BERNAMA/CS

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