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MAHATHIR-UMNO
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KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 30/(BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD IS CONFIDENT UMNO HAS THE CAPABILITY TO MAINTAIN UNITY AMONG THE MALAYS.

IN A SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH +MERDEKA+, THE PARTY'S OFFICIAL ORGAN, TO MARK UMNO'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY ON MAY 11, HE SAID UMNO WAS STILL THE STRONGEST PARTY IN THE COUNTRY.

+THERE IS NO OTHER PARTY IN MALAYSIA WHICH CAN CLAIM TO BE A MALAY NATIONAL PARTY,+ HE SAID.

THERE MIGHT BE PARTIES WHICH HAD MALAYS AS MEMBERS BUT THEY DID NOT ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO MAINTAINING MALAY UNITY AND THEIR ACTIVITIES ONLY SERVED TO DISRUPT THE UNITY OF THE COMMUNITY, HE SAID.

UMNO BELIEVED MALAY UNITY WAS THE BASIS FOR DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF THE MALAYS.

AS A STRONG PARTY WITH A LARGE MEMBERSHIP, IT WAS BOUND TO HAVE PROBLEMS, DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AND ALSO UNDERGO UNPRECEDENTED OCCURRENCES, HE SAID.

GENERALLY HOWEVER, UNITY IN UMNO WAS STRONG WITH ALL QUARTERS PLACING THE INTEREST OF THE PARTY FOREMOST AS THEY WISHED TO SEE THE PARTY ACHIEVE SUCCESS.

+THIS WILL NO DOUBT ENABLE UMNO TO OVERCOME ALL CHALLENGES,+ HE SAID.

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT SAID UMNO'S STRENGTH WAS DERIVED FROM THE UNITY OF ITS MEMBERS WHO WISHED TO SEE THE PARTY EFFECTIVE.

+IN VIEW OF THIS, THEY WILL NOT DESTROY THE PARTY FOR PERSONAL GAIN,+ HE SAID.

ON UMNO'S SUCCESS IN OVERCOMING VARIOUS FORMS OF CRISES, HE SAID THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH MEMBERS CLOSING RANKS AND JOINTLY FACING CHALLENGES.

HE WAS CONFIDENT UMNO MEMBERS WOULD BE ABLE TO REVIVE THE SPIRIT OF THEIR ORIGINAL STRUGGLE, THAT IS, WHEN THEY OPPOSED THE MALAYAN UNION AND SOUGHT INDEPENDENCE FROM THE BRITISH.

HOWEVER THERE WAS A DIMINISHING IN THIS SPIRIT AS THE MEMBERS NOW FELT MORE SECURE AFTER INDEPENDENCE.

UMNO AND THE MALAYS WERE THE BACKBONE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND IT COULD BE SAID UMNO WAS THE PARTY WHICH DETERMINED THE COUNTRY'S POLICIES, HE SAID. -- MORE

1806MST 30 04 86

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 3 KUALA LUMPUR

THE UMNO PRESIDENT ALSO TOUCHED ON THE EAGERNESS BY SOME PARTY MEMBERS TO BECOME ASSEMBLYMEN OR MPS WHICH THEY CONSIDERED A HIGH POSITION AND SOURCE OF INCOME.

+IN THE PAST, WE STRUGGLED ONLY FOR THE COMMUNITY, RELIGION AND THE NATION WITH NO PAYMENT AND NO POST IN MIND.+

NOW THEY WERE AWARE OF THE EXISTENCE OF POSTS CARRYING A GOOD INCOME AND BECAUSE OF THIS CERTAIN MEMBERS WENT ALL OUT TO SECURE THE POSTS TO GAIN STATUS AND INCOME, HE SAID.

+BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE MORE INTERESTED IN THE POST THEN IN THEIR DUTIES, THERE ARE CERTAIN MPS AND STATE ASSEMBLYMEN WHO DID NOT DISCHARGE THEIR DUTIES EFFECTIVELY,+ HE SAID.

ON THE GENERAL ELECTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PARTY WAS PREPARED FOR IT.

ITS MACHINERY HAD BEEN MOBILISED AND IT WAS READY FOR THE ELECTION ANY TIME.

UMNO WAS SKILLED IN FACING ELECTIONS AND THE VARIOUS PREPARATIONS WERE MADE A LONG TIME AGO, HE ADDED. -- MORE
1856MST 30 04 86

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 4 KUALA LUMPUR

HE WAS CONFIDENT UMNO WOULD PERFORM WELL THIS TIME ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY OF THIS NOT BEING AS EXCELLENT AS IN PAST ELECTIONS.

SINCE 1982, THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN FACING VARIOUS FORMS OF PROBLEMS DUE TO FACTORS BEYOND ITS CONTROL AND THESE PROBLEMS INVOLVED THE PEOPLE.

+THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE DISAPPOINTED PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR SOURCE OF INCOME, THOSE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED WHILE THOSE WHO ARE WORKING HAVE DEMANDED BETTER PAY BUT THEIR DEMAND HAS NOT YIELDED RESULTS. IN VIEW OF THIS, THERE WILL BE LESS SUPPORT FOR UMNO THIS TIME,+ HE SAID.

NEVERTHELESS, THEIR ACTIONS WOULD NOT HAVE ANY MAJOR EFFECT ON THE UMNO STRUGGLE AND +I AM CONFIDENT UMNO AND THE BARISAN NASIONAL WILL PERFORM WELL IN THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID. -- BERNAMA
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