

0252

B E596 AAE
MAHATHIR-DISSOLVE
BN

KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 18 (BERNAMA) -- AN EARLY GENERAL ELECTION HAS TO BE CALLED TO ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE WITH ITS TASK OF BRINGING DEVELOPMENT TO THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY WITHOUT ANY INTERRUPTION, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

VARIOUS PROBLEMS HAD EMERGED TO DISRUPT THE GOVERNMENT PROCESS AND AFFECT THE STOCK MARKET, HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING A BARISAN NASIONAL SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING AT THE UMNO COMPLEX HERE.

THE MEETING HAD DECIDED THAT THE DEWAN RAKYAT SHOULD BE DISSOLVED EFFECTIVE TOMORROW TO PAVE THE WAY FOR AN EARLY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND STATE ELECTIONS IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA ONLY.

THE PRIME MINISTER WHO IS ALSO BN CHAIRMAN SAID THE BN FELT THAT HOLDING A GENERAL ELECTION AT THIS TIME WAS MOST OPPORTUNE AFTER CONSIDERING ALL FACTORS.

HE SAID THE ABSENCE OF PILGRIMS WHO ARE AWAY PERFORMING THEIR HAJ IN THE HOLY LAND WAS NOT A CONSTRAINT TO HOLDING THE ELECTION AT THIS TIME. -- MORE

1836MST 18 07 86

B E600 AAE
MAHATHIR-DISSOLVE 2 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID ALL 13 BN COMPONENT PARTIES AGREED WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S REASONS FOR HAVING AN EARLY ELECTION AND WERE READY TO FACE IT AT ANY TIME.

THEY WERE ALSO CONFIDENT OF PERFORMING TO EXPECTATIONS, HE ADDED.

+THE BN BELIEVES IT IS SUFFICIENTLY STRONG TO FACE RIVAL PARTIES, NOT JUST IN THE PENINSULA'S EAST COAST BUT IN ALL SEATS IT WILL CONTEST,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

+THE COMPONENT PARTIES AND I ARE FULLY CONFIDENT THE BN WILL NOT ONLY RETAIN ITS TWO-THIRD MAJORITY IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT BUT ALSO HAVE EVERY PROSPECT OF IMPROVING ON THIS STANDING.+

ON THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS, HE SAID THIS ISSUE HAD BEEN RESOLVED ON THE WHOLE EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN MATTERS STILL BEING NEGOTIATED AMONG THE COMPONENT PARTIES. -- MORE

1846MST 18 07 86

B E624 AAE
MAHATHIR-DISSOLVE 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE WERE ONLY +TWO OR THREE+ SPECIFIC ISSUES REMAINING WHICH HOWEVER WERE EXPECTED TO BE SETTLED IN A DAY OR TWO.

HE STRESSED THAT THE BN'S SEAT ALLOCATION FORMULA WAS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF JUSTICE FOR ALL COMPONENT PARTIES.

AMONG THE CRITERIA APPLIED WERE THE RACIAL RATIO IN THE COUNTRY, POSITION OF THE COMMUNITIES IN EACH AREA AND ELECTION CONSTITUENCY AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE CANDIDATES CHOSEN.

ON THE BN MANIFESTO, HE SAID THE MANIFESTO BEING DRAWN UP BY A COMMITTEE WOULD LIST THE PAST ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BN GOVERNMENT AND SET OUT ITS PLEDGES FOR THE FUTURE.

FOR THE COMING GENERAL ELECTION, THE BN HAD SELECTED A NEW SLOGAN, +A TRADITION OF SERVING THE PEOPLE+, TO REPLACE THE PREVIOUS SLOGAN OF +CLEAN, EFFICIENT AND TRUSTWORTHY.+ -- MORE

2007MST 18 07 86

0322

B E628 AAE
MAHATHIR-DISSOLVE 4 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR EXPLAINED THAT THE NEW SLOGAN WAS TO SHOW THAT THE BN WAS A COALITION OF PARTIES THAT HAD A TRADITION OF SERVING THE PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF RACE.

HE SAID DROPPING THE OLD SLOGAN DID NOT MEAN THE GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED TO LIVE UP TO ITS OBJECTIVES AS THESE ASPIRATIONS HAD BEEN ATTAINED DESPITE CLAIMS TO THE CONTRARY BY SOME QUARTERS.

EACH TIME THE COUNTRY HAD A GENERAL ELECTION, THE BN WOULD COME UP WITH A NEW SLOGAN REFLECTIVE OF THE PREVAILING SITUATION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DECLINED TO DISCLOSE THE VARIOUS SEAT ALLOCATIONS FOR THE COMPONENT PARTIES, SAYING THIS WAS STILL A PARTY SECRET.+

LEADERS OF THE PARTIES HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO SUBMIT THEIR LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR HIM TO GO THROUGH IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE BN CHAIRMAN.

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2029MST 18 07 86

B E637 AAE
MAHATHIR-DISSOLVE 5 KUALA LUMPUR

ON THE ISSUES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED BY THE BN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE VITAL ISSUE WAS POLITICAL AND NATIONAL STABILITY UNDER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE DECISIONS AND ACT WITHOUT BEING THREATENED BY ANY QUARTER.

ON ALLEGATIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT DECISION TO HOLD THE GENERAL ELECTION DURING THE PILGRIMAGE SEASON AMOUNTED TO DENYING PILGRIMS AWAY IN THE HOLY LAND OF THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID SUCH ALLEGATIONS WERE TOTALLY ERRONEOUS.

HE SAID MANY PEOPLE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO EXERCISE THEIR VOTING RIGHT IN PREVIOUS ELECTIONS, AND MANY WOULD SIMILARLY BE UNABLE TO MAKE USE OF THIS RIGHT IN THIS ELECTION.

HE SAID IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO HAVE AN ELECTION IF THERE WAS A REGULATION REQUIRING EVERYONE TO BE IN THE COUNTRY BEFORE AN ELECTION COULD BE HELD.

THERE WAS ALSO NOTHING IN THE QURAN TO SAY THAT VOTING WAS A MANDATORY RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION, ABOUT 25,000 MALAYSIAN MUSLIMS ARE NOW IN SAUDI ARABIA PERFORMING THE HAJ. -- BERNAMA

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