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 MAHATHIR-GOVERNMENT
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JITRA, JULY 24 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE BARISAN NASIONAL WILL NOT RESORT TO A NATIONAL OPERATIONS COUNCIL OR MARCOS STYLE OF GOVERNMENT TO HOLD ON TO POWER.

THE PEOPLE WERE FREE TO CHOOSE THE POLITICAL PARTY THEY WANTED TO RUN THE COUNTRY THROUGH ELECTIONS, HE SAID.

HE SAID THE BN GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN GENUINELY PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY AND HAD NO WISH WHATSOEVER TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY TO REMAIN IN POWER.

HOWEVER, HE WARNED THE PEOPLE THAT IF THEY FELL FOR THE PROPAGANDA OF THE OPPOSITION, ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE GENERAL ELECTION, THE MAY 13 TROUBLES COULD OCCUR AGAIN.

(THE NATIONAL OPERATIONS COUNCIL, OR MAGERAN, WAS SET UP FOLLOWING THE MAY 13 INCIDENT IN 1969 AND WAS REPRESENTED BY POLITICAL LEADERS, THE ARMY AND THE POLICE TO GOVERN THE COUNTRY UNTIL THE 1974 GENERAL ELECTION.)

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD A 1,000-STRONG GATHERING OF BN SUPPORTERS HERE LAST NIGHT THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S GOOD INTENTION (OF HOLDING THE ELECTION) WAS HOWEVER NOT APPRECIATED BY THE DAP WHICH HAD TRIED TO STOP THE POLLS THROUGH COURT ACTION. -- MORE
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HE SAID THE DAP CLAIMED ITSELF TO BE DEMOCRATIC BUT ITS ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THE ELECTION SHOWED IT TO BE OTHERWISE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE +DICTATORIAL ATTITUDE+ OF DAP SECRETARY-GENERAL LIM KIT SIANG HAD FORCED SEVERAL OF THE PARTY'S LEADERS TO LEAVE, AND POSSIBLY OTHERS INCLUDING DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL LEE LAM THYE TO FOLLOW SUIT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID +IT WOULD BE BETTER TO ASK THE RAKYAT, IF THE RAKYAT WANT US THEY WILL CHOOSE US. THERE IS NO NEED TO REFER THE MATTER TO COURT+.

+THE CONSTITUTION PROVIDES FOR A GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD EVERY FIVE YEARS, BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS CALLED AN ELECTION BEFORE ITS TERM IS UP.

+IF THE DAP IS NOT READY, IT SHOULD HAVE TOLD THE GOVERNMENT SO,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE LEADERSHIP PROVIDED BY THE BN GOVERNMENT HAD BROUGHT GREAT DEVELOPMENT TO THE COUNTRY AND FORGED UNITY AMONG THE VARIOUS RACES SO THAT THEY COULD LIVE IN PEACE. -- BERNAMA
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