

U E308 AAE
MAHATHIR-LETTER

86

KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 25 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, IN AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MALAYSIANS TODAY, CALLED ON THEM TO STAND FIRM IN SUPPORTING THE BARISAN NASIONAL AGAIN FOR STABILITY AND A BETTER FUTURE.

+LET US NOT EXPERIMENT WITH UNTESTED IDEAS,+ DATUK MAHATHIR, WHO IS BN CHAIRMAN, SAID IN HIS LETTER CONTAINED IN THE BN MANIFESTO UNVEILED TODAY. +LET US UNITE FOR A BETTER FUTURE.+

HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT PERIOD IN ITS HISTORY. LIKE ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, IT WAS FACING A SERIOUS RECESSION.

THOUGH MALAYSIA WAS NOT AS BADLY OFF AS THE OTHERS, THE SLOWDOWN HAD WORRIED MALAYSIANS USED TO HIGH ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND IT WAS EASY TO BLAME THE GOVERNMENT AND USE IT AS A SCAPEGOAT, HE SAID.

HE SAID MALAYSIANS MUST FACE THE REALITY THAT GOVERNMENT REVENUES HAD SHRUNK, MONEY WAS HARD TO MAKE AND ASSETS DIFFICULT TO SELL NOW. -- MORE.

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HOWEVER, THE FACTS SHOWED THAT THE FALL IN COMMODITY PRICES WAS NOT THE COUNTRY'S OWN MAKING AS SLACK DEMAND, SUBSTITUTE MATERIALS AND MARKET MANIPULATIONS BY RICH COUNTRIES HAD DEPRESSED PRIMARY COMMODITIES PRICES, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ONLY WAY TO RIDE THROUGH THE RECESSION WAS TO FACE IT CALMLY, PLAN CAREFUL MOVES AND TO UTILISE INTRINSIC STRENGTHS.

+IF WE GIVE IN TO EMOTIONS, IF WE CHOOSE THE EASY WAY OUT AND WILDLY ACCUSE EACH OTHER, WE WILL ONLY COMPOUND THE DAMAGE,+ HE ADDED.

+IF MALAYSIA IS SO BAD, WHY DO SO MANY PEOPLE TAKE RISKS TO SMUGGLE THEMSELVES INTO THE COUNTRY?+ HE ASKED.

IT WAS ESPECIALLY WHEN THE GOING GOT TOUGH THAT THE NATION NEEDED A STEADY, EXPERIENCED AND FIRM HAND TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS, HE SAID.

+WE NEED A STRONG GOVERNMENT AND ALREADY CORRECTIVE MEASURES ARE SHOWING RESULTS,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE.

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MAHATHIR-LETTER 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE NATION'S EXTERNAL BORROWINGS HAD BEEN REDUCED FROM \$4.6 BILLION IN 1982 TO \$0.8 BILLION LAST YEAR. GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE HAD BEEN REDUCED FROM \$27,110 MILLION IN 1982 TO \$24,859 MILLION LAST YEAR.

ALSO, IMPORTS HAD BEEN REDUCED SO MUCH THAT THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS HAD BEEN INCREASINGLY FAVOURABLE DESPITE SLUGGISH EXPORTS. THERE WERE BETTER GROWTH INCENTIVES, RESERVES REMAINED HIGH, JOBS WERE BEING CREATED AND THE CIVIL SERVICE PERFORMANCE HAD IMPROVED, HE SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO BE GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF +BERSIH, CEKAP AND AMANAH+ (CLEAN, EFFICIENT AND TRUSTWORTHY) AND WILL ALSO CONTINUE WITH OUR EFFORTS TO CREATE A MODERN, DISCIPLINED AND MORAL SOCIETY,+ HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNMENT HAD A SOUND TRACK RECORD AND THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF MALAYSIA WAS ENVIED BY MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HEALTH, MEDICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES HAD IMPROVED, THE PRICES OF ESSENTIALS REDUCED, CHEAP HOUSES BUILT, RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSING, THE AGRICULTURAL BASE BROADENED AND MALAYSIANS ENJOYED A HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING, HE SAID. -- MORE.

1245MST 25 07 86

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U E312 AAE
MAHATHIR-LETTER 4 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, WHERE THE POOR WERE CONCENTRATED, CONTINUED TO RECEIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION. +INDEED, THE POOR HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HELPED. THE RICH ARE HELPED ONLY WHERE THEIR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES WILL CREATE JOBS AND GENERATE FASTER GROWTH,+

MALAYSIANS, HE SAID, HAD EVERY REASON TO BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE AS THE COUNTRY WOULD NOT BE TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON COMMODITIES AND WOULD MANUFACTURE MORE FOR EXPORT .

ON THE ARGUMENTS BY THE OPPOSITION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE DEPRIVED OF A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY WIN IN THE GENERAL ELECTION AS IT WAS TOO STRONG, HE SAID +MULTI-RACIAL MALAYSIA NEEDS A STRONG GOVERNMENT TO MOVE AHEAD TO GUARANTEE STABILITY.+

HE ASKED THE OPPOSITION WHETHER IT WOULD WANT A WEAK GOVERNMENT IF IT WAS RULING.

A WEAK GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BRING THE COUNTRY OUT OF THE RECESSION AS IT WOULD BE PLAYING THE POLITICS OF SURVIVAL. -- MORE.

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MAHATHIR - LETTER 5 KUALA LUMPUR

+AS POLITICIANS TRY TO OUTMANOEUVRE EACH OTHER, THE COUNTRY SUFFERS AND OUR CHILDREN DESERVE A BETTER FUTURE,+ HE SAID. +LOOK AT THE COUNTRIES WITH WEAK GOVERNMENTS. HAVE THEY PROSPERED? ISN'T THERE CIVIL STRIFE, INSTABILITY, EVEN CHAOS AND CIVIL WAR? EVEN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FAIL WHEN THE GOVERNMENTS ARE WEAK,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN VERY LIBERAL AND THE NUMEROUS BASELESS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST IT FROM THE OPPOSITION ONLY PROVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT +OPPRESSIVE+, AS CLAIMED.

THERE WERE NOW FREER REPORTS AND COMMENTS IN THE MEDIA THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME IN THE COUNTRY'S HISTORY, HE SAID. OFTEN, THESE WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION AND SOUGHT TO SOW CONFUSION AND DOUBT, HE ADDED.

+THIS IS THE PRICE OF DEMOCRACY.+ HE SAID. +THE GOVERNMENT'S ONLY WEAPON IS TRUTH AND POSITIVE ACTION.+

ALTHOUGH FACED WITH PROBLEMS, HOWEVER THREATENING, THE BN DID NOT RESORT TO EXTREMISM, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID. -- MORE.

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MAHATHIR-LETTER 6 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID: +THE BN DECIDES BY CONSULTATION, ABHORS EMOTIONS, DRAWS UP AND IMPLEMENTS CONCRETE BENEFICIAL PLANS, LISTENS TO THE PEOPLE AND BALANCES THE DEMANDS OF THE DIFFERENT RACES, REGIONS AND STATES, RICH AND POOR, AND THE URBAN AND RURAL.+

THE BN'S BASIC PHILOSOPHIES WERE SOUND, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, ADDING: +IT BELIEVES IN RESULTS, NOT RHETORIC.+

HE SAID IF THE BN HAD NOT ACHIEVED COMPLETE SUCCESS, IT WAS BECAUSE LIKE ALL NATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS, IT COULD NOT SEE ALL EVENTUALITIES, DID NOT HAVE UNLIMITED RESOURCES AND HAD NOT PERFECTED ITS IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES.

HOWEVER, HE ASSURED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE CORRECTIVE MEASURES WHEREVER NEEDED AS IT WAS A RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT.

+WITH YOUR MANDATE, GOD WILLING, WE WILL OVERCOME,+ HE SAID. +WE WILL SUCCEED.+ -- BERNAMA.

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