

B E614 AAE
MAHATHIR-LEADERS R R R R R R R R R R R
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(P)

BUTTERWORTH, MARCH 20²⁷ (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE CURRENT PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS WILL SURELY STEP DOWN WHEN THE TIME COMES.

WHEN THIS HAPPENED, THE DOOR WOULD BE THROWN WIDE OPEN TO ANYONE ASPIRING TO BECOME LEADERS, HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ASPIRANTS WOULD HAVE THEIR TURN IN TIME AS EXISTING LEADERS WERE GETTING ON IN AGE WITH THE PASSING OF THE YEARS AND WOULD NOT REMAIN AT THE TOP FOREVER.

OPENING THE DELEGATES' MEETING OF THE BAGAN UMNO DIVISION HERE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID LEADERSHIP CHANGES SHOULD TAKE PLACE SMOOTHLY AND NOT GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS.

THIS WAS THE BEST WAY AND HARMONIOUS WITH THE TRADITION OF THE MALAYS NOT TO +ROB+ OR +WREST FROM+ ANOTHER.

HE SAID ALTHOUGH DEMOCRACY WAS A PARTY PRACTICE, ITS EXERCISE SHOULD BE CONSONANT WITH THE NATURE OF MALAY DECORUM AND ETIQUETTE.

DEMOCRACY GAVE EVERYONE THE RIGHT TO CONTEST FOR LEADERSHIP POSTS, BUT THIS RIGHT SHOULD BE EXERCISED WITHIN CERTAIN BOUNDS.

ACCORDING TO HIM, UMNO WOULD DEFINITELY REMAIN STABLE IF FREE FROM CHALLENGES AND COUNTER CHALLENGES AND OUSTING OF ONE ANOTHER IN THE EFFORTS TO BECOME LEADERS. -- MORE

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B E622 AAE
MAHATHIR-LEADER 2 BUTTERWORTH R R R R R R R R R R R

HE SAID UMNO, THE BACKBONE OF THE GOVERNMENT, HAD ALWAYS BEEN RESPECTED BY OTHER PARTIES BECAUSE IT WAS STRONG AND ITS MEMBERS WERE UNITED AND SUPPORTED THEIR PRESIDENT.

THE OTHER PARTIES HOWEVER RESPECTED, NOT THE PERSONALITY, BUT THE POST BEHIND WHICH STOOD A UNITED MEMBERSHIP.

+WHETHER IT IS ME OR SOMEBODY ELSE (AS PRESIDENT), IS NOT IMPORTANT. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT UMNO NOT BE DIVIDED BECAUSE ITS STRENGTH AND THE STRENGTH OF THE MALAY RACE DEPEND ON THE UNITY OF THE MEMBERS.+

HE ASKED PARTY MEMBERS TO THINK ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE MALAYS OF THE PAST WHO RALLIED TO THROW OFF THE YOKE OF BRITISH COLONIALISM AT A TIME WHEN THEY WERE WEAK.

HE STRESSED THAT ANYONE COULD BECOME A LEADER BUT THEY SHOULD NOT DISUNITE OR RUN DOWN THE PARTY TO THE EXTENT OF DESTROYING IT AND THE MALAYS SOLELY TO ADVANCE THEIR AMBITIONS.

UMNO MEMBERS WERE MATURE AND ONLY THOSE WHO DID NOT WANT TO CONSIDER THE INTERESTS OF THE RACE, COUNTRY AND RELIGION COULD CAUSE THE PARTY TO LOSE ITS POWER AND POSITION AND ISLAM TO BE THREATENED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IF THIS HAPPENED, THE POWER THAT WAS LOST MIGHT NEVER BE REGAINED BECAUSE THE OTHER QUARTERS THAT HAD BENEFITTED BY THIS LOSS WOULD NEVER ALLOW POWER TO SLIP OUT OF THEIR GRASP FOR THEY KNEW WELL THE CALIBRE OF UMNO. -- MORE

2120MST 20 03 87

B E623 AAE
MAHATHIR-LEADER 3 BUTTERWORTH R R R R R R R R R R

HE DREW ATTENTION TO THE DEVELOPMENTS IN SOME STATES AND BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES WHICH HE SAID WERE EXPERIENCING A POWER STRUGGLE AMONG THEIR LEADERS, LEADING TO THE FALL OF LEADERS AND TO PARTY DISUNITY AS A RESULT OF SABOTAGE AMONG ONE ANOTHER.

HE REGRETTED SUCH ACTIONS, SAYING THE TRAMPING AROUND THE COUNTRY DENOUNCING THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP AND SPREADING SLANDER AGAINST THOSE WHO HAD BEEN COLLEAGUES AND FELLOW WORKERS FOR SO LONG AND WHO HAD NO CHANCE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES COULD BRING ABOUT DISUNITY IN THE PARTY.

+I AM NOT MAKING AN APPEAL FOR MYSELF, I AM APPEALING FOR UMNO, ONLY THIS, BECAUSE UMNO IS THE ONLY PARTY THAT CAN PROTECT THE MALAYS,+ HE ADDED.

+DO NOT DAMAGE THE PARTY HOWEVER VAULTING OUR AMBITIONS BECAUSE THE PROGRAMME FOR THE MALAYS IS NOT YET COMPLETED, AND WILL NEVER BE COMPLETED IF WE LOSE OUR POWERS.+

AFTER THE OPENING CEREMONY, THE PRIME MINISTER LEFT FOR ALOR SETAR. DESPITE THE OPENING BEING TODAY, THE BAGAN UMNO DIVISION DELEGATES MEETING PROPER WILL BE HELD THIS SUNDAY. -- BERNAMA
2135MST 20 03 87