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B E280 AAE
TUNKU-LETTER R'R'R'R'R R

PULAU PINANG, MARCH 24⁸⁷ (BERNAMA) -- TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN TODAY ISSUED A CLARIFICATION PERTAINING TO A LETTER SENT TO HIM WHEN HE WAS PRIME MINISTER WHICH HAS BECOME ONE OF THE ISSUES IN THE RUN-UP TO THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL ELECTIONS NEXT MONTH.

HE SAID HE WANTED TO CLEAR THE AIR ON THE LETTER AS HE DID NOT WANT TO BE DRAWN INTO +THIS POLITICAL BATTLE RAGING FIERCELY AMONG THE CONTESTANTS FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF UMNO.+

HE SAID HE WAS FORCED TO PUT THE FACTS RIGHT SINCE UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT DATUK MUSA HITAM BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF A LETTER BY DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TO HIM (TUNKU), WHO WAS PRIME MINISTER THEN, AS AN ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW HIM (TUNKU).

DATUK MUSA'S RAISING OF THE LETTER HAD DRAWN A REPLY FROM DEPUTY HOME MINISTER DATUK MEGAT JUNID MEGAT AYOB TODAY.

IN A STATEMENT TO BERNAMA AND THE STAR, THE TUNKU SAID THERE WERE SOME LETTERS PUBLISHED IN THE MALAY NEWSPAPERS THEN ABOUT THE OUTBREAK OF THE MAY 13 VIOLENCE WHICH TO HIS MIND COULD WORSEN THE SITUATION +AND I ADVISED SYED JAFFAR ALBAR, SYED NASIR (ISMAIL) (TWO UMNO LEADERS AT THAT TIME) AND DR MAHATHIR NOT TO PLAY IT UP. -- MORE
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TUNKU-LETTER 2 PULAU PINANG R'R'R'R'R

+TWO OF THEM APOLOGISED WHILE DR MAHATHIR WENT ON TO CRITICISE ME,+ THE TUNKU SAID.

+THE LETTER WHICH HE WROTE TO ME BECAME NO SECRET AS IT WAS CIRCULATED IN THOUSANDS TO EVERYBODY.

+IT WAS A LETTER THE LIKE OF WHICH I HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE IN ALL MY POLITICAL CAREER, THE LAST AND MOST UNLIKELY COMMUNICATION I WOULD HAVE EXPECTED TO GET FROM A MAN WHO HAD ALWAYS PUT HIMSELF FORWARD...AS A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF THE PARTY,+ THE TUNKU SAID.

HE SAID COPIES OF THE LETTER WERE CYCLOSTYLED AND WIDELY CIRCULATED IN THOUSANDS AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE MALAY STUDENTS AND EVEN TO PEOPLE IN THE KAMPUNGS.

THE TUNKU SAID: +MY REMARK WAS: IF DR MAHATHIR HIMSELF WAS NOT DIRECTLY AND PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF HIS LETTER, THEN HE CERTAINLY DID NOTHING TO PREVENT SUCH AN ACTION TAKING PLACE.+ -- MORE

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B E282 AAE
TUNKU-LETTER 3 PULAU PINANG R'R'R'R'R

AT THE MEETING OF THE UMNO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AT WHICH DR MAHATHIR WAS PRESENT, THE MEETING DECIDED THAT THE ACTION OF DR MAHATHIR CONSTITUTED A SERIOUS BREACH OF PARTY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATIONS WHICH UNCHECKED WOULD DESTROY THE UNITY IN THE PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY THE PARTY, THE TUNKU ADDED.

+THE COUNCIL, ATTENDED BY ALL CABINET MINISTERS AND MENTERI-MENTERI BESAR, DECIDED THAT DR MAHATHIR HAS CEASED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL AS FROM THAT DAY.+

THE TUNKU SAID TUN DR ISMAIL (WHO WAS HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER THEN) MADE AN ORDER UNDER THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT, 1960, PROHIBITING THE PUBLICATION, DISTRIBUTION OR POSSESSION OF COPIES OF THE LETTER.

+THIS IS ONLY TO CLEAR THE AIR ON THAT LETTER, AND I WILL SAY NO MORE, EXCEPT THAT I WAS NOT PRESENT AT THAT COUNCIL MEETING.

+I LEFT THE GOVERNMENT WHEN MY NEPHEW THE SULTAN OF KEDAH BECAME THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGUNG,+ THE TUNKU SAID. -- BERNAMA

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