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MAHATHIR-ELECTION R R R  
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(P)  
KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 26<sup>37</sup> (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY HANDED OVER TO UMNO MEMBERS TO DECIDE WHETHER THEY WANT TO MAINTAIN THE POWER OF THE PARTY PRESIDENT TO SELECT UMNO CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

HE ADVISED THEM TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY ANY PROPOSALS REGARDING THE MATTER AS THESE COULD HAVE VARIOUS IMPLICATIONS.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT SAID THAT IF THEY DECIDED THAT THEY WANT THE POWER OF THE PARTY PRESIDENT IN THIS MATTER TO BE WITHDRAWN, HE WAS PREPARED TO BRING UP THE MATTER TO THE SUPREME COUNCIL.

THE DELEGATES HAD THE RIGHT TO CALL FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO AMEND THE PARTY CONSTITUTION REGARDING MATTERS RELATED TO THAT RIGHT OF THE PARTY PRESIDENT, HE SAID WHEN WINDING UP THE DEBATE AT THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON THE POWER OF THE PARTY PRESIDENT IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS TO BE CONTESTED IN A GENERAL ELECTION, RAISED BY PAHANG UMNO. -- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-ELECTION 2 KUALA LUMPUR R R R

PAHANG UMNO HAD URGED THAT THE POWER TO DETERMINE THE UMNO CANDIDATES FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS BE GIVEN TO THE DIVISIONS. DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IN THIS MATTER, HE DID NOT WANT TO DEVIATE FROM THE PARTY CONSTITUTION.

HE SAID THAT UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM CANDIDATES WERE RECOMMENDED TO HIM BY STATE UMNO LIAISON BODIES.

THIS SYSTEM WAS IN LINE WITH THE PARTY STRATEGY WHEN SNAP ELECTIONS WERE ANNOUNCED, HE ADDED.

BECAUSE OF THE TIME CONSTRAINT WHEN SUCH ELECTIONS WERE HELD, THE PARTY WOULD NOT HAVE TIME TO SCRUTINISE ALL CANDIDATES BUT WOULD HAVE TO DEPEND A GREAT DEAL ON THE LIST OF NAMES PROPOSED BY STATE UMNO LIAISON HEADS, HE SAID. -- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-ELECTION 3 KUALA LUMPUR R R R

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PREVIOUS GENERAL ELECTION, HE SAID THAT HE KNEW ONLY A CERTAIN OF CANDIDATES AND THOSE HE FELT TO BE NOT SUITABLE WERE DROPPED.

HOWEVER, THE NUMBER OF THOSE DROPPED WAS SMALL.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE DID NOT KNOW A LARGE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES PROPOSED, ESPECIALLY THE NEW FACES, AND WAS THUS UNABLE TO EVALUATE THEIR PROS AND CONS AND HAD TO RELY ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATE UMNO LIAISON HEADS.

+IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO KNOW ALL CANDIDATES RECOMMENDED, ESPECIALLY THE NEW FACES.+

IN VIEW OF THE SHORT TIME FROM THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT AND STATE ASSEMBLIES AND THE DATE OF POLLING IN SNAP ELECTIONS, HE WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS, HE ADDED.

UMNO AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL ONLY CONFIRMED THE NAMES OF CANDIDATES RECOMMENDED, HE SAID. -- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-ELECTION 4 KUALA LUMPUR \* \* \*

HE SAID ANY PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM OF DETERMINING THE CANDIDATES WOULD GIVE RISE TO VARIOUS IMPLICATIONS, INCLUDING THE EARLY DISCLOSURE OF THE DATE OF THE GENERAL ELECTION, LIKE UMNO FIXING THE DATE OF THE PARTY ELECTION.

THIS METHOD, IF PRACTISED, WOULD NOT ONLY PROVIDE A LONG PERIOD FOR CAMPAIGNING BUT ALSO THE COMPETITION TO BECOME CANDIDATES WOULD BECOME MORE INTENSE EVEN AT THE BRANCH LEVEL, HE SAID.

IN THE MATTER OF DISTRIBUTION OF CANDIDATES, UMNO MEMBERS SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER THE CANDIDATES FROM OTHER BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES, HE ADDED.

THE UMNO PRESIDENT ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS NO USE FOR UMNO TO HAVE POWER BUT NOT THE POWER TO ADMINISTER THE NATION. -- BERNAMA  
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