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 MAHATHIR R R R

BM

LABUAN, SEPT 11<sup>87</sup> (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY TOLD UMNO MEMBERS THE TIME HAS COME FOR THEM TO CLOSE RANKS AND RE-UNITE.

+THERE IS NO LONGER ANY TEAM A OR TEAM B. THERE IS ONLY THE UMNO TEAM,+ HE SAID AT A GATHERING OF ABOUT 100 LABUAN UMNO DIVISION AND BRANCH LEADERS HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, REGRETTED THE DISUNITY THAT OCCURRED IN THE PARTY DURING THE ELECTIONS FOR TOP PARTY POSTS IN APRIL

THERE WERE STILL PARTY MEMBERS WHO DID NOT WANT TO ACCEPT THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS AND SOME WERE EVEN PREPARED TO TAKE COURT ACTION TO CHALLENGE THE RESULTS, HE SAID. -- MORE

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HE SAID THESE MEMBERS DID NOT HAVE THE SPIRIT OF UMNO.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS POINTLESS FOR A POLITICAL PARTY TO HAVE MANY MEMBERS WHEN IT WAS WEAK DUE TO INTERNAL DISUNITY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID PROBLEMS WITHIN UMNO, WHICH NOW HAS 1.4 MILLION MEMBERS, SHOULD BE OVERCOME THROUGH THE VARIOUS PARTY LEVELS, SUCH AS THE SUPREME COUNCIL, LIAISON COMMITTEES OR DIVISIONS.

HE HOPED THAT IN FUTURE, IF THERE WAS A CONTEST FOR TOP POSTS IN THE PARTY, THERE WOULD BE NO CAMPAIGNING.

CAMPAIGNING, HE POINTED OUT, MIGHT RESULT IN DIRTY TACTICS BEING EMPLOYED, INCLUDING CORRUPTION.

+WITH CORRUPTION, A PERSON CAN BECOME AN ITEM OF TRADE AND CONSEQUENTLY, THE PARTY ITSELF COULD BE TRADED TO OTHERS,+ HE SAID.

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+IF UMNO IS TRADED AWAY, IT WILL LOSE ITS POWER. ONCE POWER IS LOST, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO REGAIN IT, LIKE WHAT HAPPENED IN SABAH WHEN MUSLIMS IN POWER AT ONE TIME DID NOT USE IT WELL,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE RECEIVED MANY COMPLAINTS OF MUSLIMS IN SABAH BEING ALLEGEDLY HARASSED BUT +THIS IS ONLY A POSSIBILITY AND IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN POWER IS LOST.+

HE SAID UMNO WANTED TO REMAIN IN POWER AND BE FAIR TO THE PEOPLE AND GAVE AN ASSURANCE IT WOULD NOT MISUSE ITS POWER FOR PERSONAL INTEREST.

THE PRIME MINISTER HOPED ALL UMNO MEMBERS, PARTICULARLY IN LABUAN, WOULD UNDERSTAND THE PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES OF UMNO AND RESOLVE TO ADHERE TO ALL PARTY REGULATIONS. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR THEN HELD A CLOSED-DOOR MEETING WITH LABUAN BARISAN NASIONAL LEADERS.

HE TOLD REPORTERS LATER THAT AT THE MEETING, HE EXPLAINED THE CONCEPT OF THE BN AND THE NEED FOR BN LEADERS TO REDUCE FRICTION AMONG THEMSELVES.

HE SAID THEY SHOULD NOT BE HASTY IN MAKING STATEMENTS WHICH MIGHT HURT THE FEELINGS OF THEIR BN COLLEAGUES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO PROBLEMS PERTAINING TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF LABUAN WHICH WERE RAISED BY THE LABUAN BN.

ON AUG 12, 10 OF THE 13 LABUAN MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS COMPRISING BN REPRESENTATIVES PASSED A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE AGAINST COUNCIL PRESIDENT KAMARUDDIN IDRIS FOR WHAT THEY CLAIMED WAS BYPASSING THEM IN MAKING IMPORTANT DECISIONS. -- MORE

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HE SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO OVERCOMING THE PROBLEM BUT DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE MEETINGS WERE AGRICULTURE MINISTER AND UMNO SECRETARY-GENERAL DATUK SERI SANUSI JUNID, TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER AND WANITA UMNO HEAD DATIN PADUKA RAFIDAH AZIZ, AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES MINISTER DATUK NAPSIAH OMAR.

LAND AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER DATUK DR SULAIMAN DAUD IS ACCOMPANYING THE PRIME MINISTER ON HIS VISIT HERE. -- BERNAMA  
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