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JITRA, NOV 24 (BERNAMA) -- UMNO MAY CONSIDER JOINING THE PAS-INITIATED +BARISANISLAMIAH+ MOVEMENT IF ITS FORMATION IS REALLY TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF ISLAM, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY

HOWEVER, IF ITS PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT HAD A POLITICAL MOTIVE, UMNO WAS NOT INTERESTED, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID.

THE SETTING UP OF A GENUINE MOVEMENT FOR ISLAM WAS ALWAYS LAUDABLE BUT UMNO WANTED MORE DETAILS ON THE OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF THE PROPOSED MOVEMENT, HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER VISITING HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE ABUBAKAR HUSSEIN AT HIS HOUSE IN KAMPUNG PADANG NEAR HERE. ENCIK ABUBAKAR HAS BEEN TAKEN ILL.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS COMMENTING ON A PRESS REPORT TODAY QUOTING PAS VICE-PRESIDENT HAJI NAKHAIE AHMAD AS SAYING THE PARTY PLANNED TO MEET VARIOUS GROUPS, INCLUDING LOCAL POLITICAL PARTIES, TO DISCUSS FORMING THE BARISAN ISLAMIAH.

+I CANNOT COMMENT FURTHER ON THE MATTER UNTIL THE PROPOSED MOVEMENT HAS BEEN CLEARLY **EXPLAINED**, + HE ADDED. -- MORE
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ON THE ASEAN SUMMIT NEXT MONTH, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA DID NOT INTEND TO RAISE ANY NEW OR SPECIAL ISSUE AT THE MEETING, ADDING: +I AM ATTENDING THE SUMMIT ONLY TO DISCUSS TOPICS IN THE AGENDA.+

HE DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT'S TABLING OF A BILL IN THE SENATE RECENTLY DELINEATING THAT COUNTRY'S ARCHIPELAGIC BASES THAT EXCLUDED SABAH, A MOVE TOWARDS DROPPING OF THAT COUNTRY'S CLAIM ON SABAH.

+LET THE BILL BE PASSED FIRST, THEN I WILL COMMENT,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD EARLIER CONCLUDED A THREE-DAY VISIT TO LANGKAWI FROM SUNDAY TO OPEN A COURSE FOR STATE ASSEMBLYMEN AND DISTRICT OFFICERS FROM MELAKA, KEDAH AND PAHANG.

IN LANGKAWI, THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO TOURED THE HYDROPONIC VEGETABLE FARM PROJECT OF UNEMPLOYED GRADUATE MARZUKI ABDUL RAHMAN IN KAMPUNG PADANG LALANG NEAR KUAH.

HE SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE PROJECT WHICH MARZUKI STARTED IN SEPTEMBER WITH A \$17,000 BANK PERTANIAN LOAN, ADDING IT WAS +VERY INTERESTING AND SUCCESSFUL+. -- MORE

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+I HOPE MARZUKI WILL SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE OF SELF-RELIANCE TO OTHER UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO ALSO VISITED THE SITE OF A ZOO-ROOM HOTEL PROJECT BY PERNAS AND A PRIVATE COMPANY IN PANTAI CENANG, SAID THE AREA WAS SUITABLE AS A RESORT AND COULD ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS TO THE ISLAND. -- BERNAMA

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