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MAHATHIR-BN
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KUALA LUMPUR, JUNE 18 (BERNAMA) -- THE BARISAN NASIONAL (BN) HAS NO DIRECT MEMBERSHIP AND THEREFORE, IT DOES NOT HAVE POWERS TO SACK MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND STATE ASSEMBLYMEN ELECTED ON THE COALITION'S TICKET, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT THE BN DID NOT HAVE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND THAT ITS MEMBERS WERE ONLY COMPONENT PARTIES.

IN LINE WITH THIS, THE POSITION OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AS TO WHETHER THEY WERE STILL BN SUPPORTERS OR NOT DEPENDED ON THEY THEMSELVES, HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING A TWO-HOUR BN SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING AT MENARA DATUK ONN HERE.

THE STATUS OF SEVERAL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND STATE ASSEMBLYMEN OF THE OLD UMNO WHO WERE ELECTED ON A BN TICKET IN THE LAST GENERAL ELECTION HAD BEEN QUESTIONED RECENTLY FOLLOWING THEIR REFUSAL TO JOIN UMNO (BARU).

+BN ONLY HAS (COMPONENT) PARTIES AS MEMBERS AND HAS NO DIRECT MEMBERSHIP,+ SAID DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS BN CHAIRMAN. -- MORE
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+IN SHORT, THERE IS NO ONE WHO IS A BN MEMBER. A PERSON CAN REPRESENT BN IF HE CONTESTS AS A BN CANDIDATE AND IS NOMINATED AMONG BN COMPONENT PARTY MEMBERS,+ HE SAID.

+BECAUSE BN DOES NOT HAVE MEMBERS, THE COALITION CANNOT SACK ANYONE,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT THIS BN DECISION WAS NOT NEW BECAUSE IN THE PAST THERE WAS A CASE WHERE SEVERAL MCA MEMBERS WERE SACKED FROM THE PARTY BUT THERE WAS NO ACTION AT THE BN LEVEL.

+THEREFORE, THIS IS NOT SOMETHING NEW FOR THE BN BECAUSE THERE IS ALREADY A PRECEDENT IN WHICH THE BN DOES NOT TAKE A STAND ALTHOUGH A COMPONENT PARTY MAY TAKE ACTION,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO (BARU) PRESIDENT, SAID THE POSITION OF UMNO (BARU) DIFFERED A LITTLE IN THAT IT COULD NOT SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THOSE WHO WERE NOT ITS MEMBERS.

+WHAT WE KNOW IS THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT UMNO (BARU) MEMBERS AND WHATEVER ACTION WE WANT TO TAKE, WE TAKE. BN AS A POLITICAL ORGANISATION HAS NO POWERS TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
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ASKED ON THE NUMBER OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE OLD UMNO WHO DID NOT JOIN THE NEW PARTY, HE SAID THE NUMBER HAD NOT BEEN DETERMINED BECAUSE THE MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION PROCESS HAD NOT BEEN COMPLETED.

ON THEIR POSITION IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT: +IT RESTS WITH PARLIAMENT TO DECIDE...IF THERE IS AN APPLICATION TO CHANGE THE SEATING ARRANGEMENTS, THEN THE SPEAKER WILL DERMINE THIS.+

HOWEVER, HE SAID +IF THERE IS NO APPLICATION, WE CANNOT DO ANYTHING.+

THE DEWAN RAKYAT SITS FROM JUNE 27 AND DEWAN RAKYAT SPEAKER TAN SRI ZAHIR ISMAIL HAD SAID RECENTLY THAT THEIR SEATING ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE DETERMINED AFTER THE BN MADE A DECISION ON THE MATTER.

TAN SRI ZAHIR ALSO SAID HE COULD MAKE A DECISION IF THE OLD UMNO ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES WROTE TO HIM TO CONFIRM THEY HAD LEFT THE BN.

SO FAR, ONLY FORMER WELFARE MINISTER DATUK SHAHRIR SAMAD, THE MP FOR JOHOR BAHRU, HAD WRITTEN TO THE SPEAKER ON THE MATTER. -- MORE 1654MST 18 06 88

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ON DEVELOPMENT ALLOCATION FOR ELECTORAL CONSTITUENCIES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT HAD BEEN THE PRACTICE THAT ALL ALLOCATIONS BE MADE TO THE STATE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER WHO WILL CHANNEL IT TO THE DISTRICT OFFICERS.

+ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS...BUT HAVE NO RIGHT TO RELEASE MONEY,+ SAID THE PRIME MINISTER, STRESSING THAT WHETHER OR NOT SUGGESTIONS BY THEM WOULD BE ACCEPTED WOULD REST WITH THE ADMINISTRATION PROCESS.

+EVERY ELECTORAL AREA IS GIVEN AN ALLOCATION AND IF THERE IS ANYONE WHO WANTS TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS, WE MAY ACCEPT, AND SOMETIMES WE CANNOT ACCEPT,+ HE SAID.

AMONG THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING WERE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ENCIK GHAFAR BABA AND HEADS OF THE BN COMPONENT PARTIES.

UMNO (BARU) VICE-PRESIDENTS ENCIK ANWAR IBRAHIM, DATUK ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI AND DATUK HAJI WAN MOKHTAR AHMAD, AND SECRETARY-GENERAL DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT ALSO ATTENDED THE MEETING. -- BERNAMA 1656MST 18 06 88