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MAHATHIR-POLITICS
BM

SEREMBAN, JULY 2 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY HE IS PROUD THAT THE BARISAN NASIONAL IS ABLE TO CONTINUE ITS TRADITION OF HOLDING DISCUSSIONS IN AN ORGANISED MANNER AND WITH MUTUAL RESPECT IN RESOLVING WHATEVER MATTERS WHICH ARISE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS BARISAN NASIONAL CHAIRMAN, SAID ALTHOUGH AT TIMES DOUBTS WERE CAST ON THIS TRADITION, ON THE WHOLE IT HAD MANAGED TO CONTINUE.

+WE HAVE DISCUSSED MANY IMPORTANT MATTERS WITH WISDOM AND TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY AND THE MULTI RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS PEOPLE,+ HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE 36TH MIC GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE STRENGTH OF THE ALL THE BN COMPONENT PARTIES WOULD ENSURE THE RESILIENCE OF THE COALITION.

HE SAID THAT THE NATION REQUIRED A STRONG AND UNITED GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY TO CONTINUE DEVELOPING THE COUNTRY. -- MORE
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+THE CHALLENGES WILL BE THERE AND WE SHOULD OVERCOME THEM. IN DOING SO, WE SHOULD NOT QUARREL AND BE SPLIT. THE BEST WAY TO OVERCOME THEM IS THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND MEETINGS,+ HE SAID.

ON THE ECONOMY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA DEPENDED VERY MUCH ON ITS EXPORTS TO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

AT PRESENT THE COUNTRY WAS ALSO COMPETING WITH DEVELOPED NATIONS AS MALAYSIA WAS ABLE TO PRODUCE MANUFACTURED GOODS IN VIEW OF ITS SUCCESSES IN THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, HE SAID.

+THE ABILITY OF THE COUNTRY TO PRODUCE GOODS WHICH ARE BETTER AND CHEAPER THAN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES MEANS WE ARE THREATENING THE LUXURIES ENJOYED BY THE WORKERS IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,+ HE SAID.

+THEY CAN ONLY COMPETE WITH US IF THEY INCREASE THE COST OF PRODUCTION OF OUR GOODS,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
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+SO, THEY ARE TRYING TO JACK UP THE COST OF PRODUCTION BY ADVISING THE WORKERS IN THE COUNTRY TO MAKE CLAIMS WHICH THE EMPLOYERS ARE UNABLE TO MEET AND TAKE INDUSTRIAL ACTION.+

+AS THOUGH THEY SYMPATHISE WITH THE FATE OF THE WORKERS HERE AND ARE CONCERNED WITH WORKERS' AND HUMAN RIGHTS, THEY (WORKERS AND TRADE UNION LEADERS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES) ARE ONLY TRYING TO INFLUENCE THE ACTIONS OF THE WORKERS AND TRADE UNION LEADERS IN THIS COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID SUCH ACTION BY THE WORKERS AND THEIR LEADERS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES WAS ONLY AIMED AT MAKING THE WORKERS IN THIS COUNTRY POORER AND LOSE THEIR JOBS WHILE THEY THEMSELVES BECAME WELL OFF.

THIS WAS CLEARLY EVIDENT WHEN THEIR BLOCK IN THE ILO URGED DEVELOPED NATIONS TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SUCH AS MALAYSIA PURPORTEDLY BECAUSE SUCH COUNTRIES DID NOT RESPECT HUMAN AND WORKERS' RIGHTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER WANTED MALAYSIAN WORKERS TO TAKE NOTE OF THIS FACT AND OTHER ACTIONS SUCH AS THOSE OF THE AMERICAN SOYABEAN ASSOCIATION (ASA) IN DECIDING WHETHER THEY SYMPATHIZED WITH MALAYSIANS OR OTHERWISE. -- MORE
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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE ASA EMPLOYED ALL KINDS OF TACTICS TO DISCREDIT PALM OIL WHICH WAS THE SOURCE OF INCOME OF THOUSANDS OF MALAYSIAN WORKERS AND SCHEME SETTLERS.

DESPITE ALL THESE OBSTACLES, THE GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE TO MAKE CAREFUL PLANNING AND TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION TO ENHANCE THE MALAYSIAN ECONOMY RESULTING IN MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, HE SAID.

THE MALAYSIAN ECONOMY WHICH RECORDED GOOD GROWTH LAST YEAR SHOWED SIGNS OF PERFORMING BETTER THIS YEAR, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

THE PRICES OF RAW MATERIALS HAD INCREASED INCLUDING THAT OF TIN WHICH WAS EARLIER THOUGHT TO HAVE NO FUTURE.

FOREIGN AND LOCAL INVESTMENT HAD ALSO GONE UP EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO DISCREDITED THEIR OWN COUNTRY OVERSEAS. --

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THERE WAS ONE INDIVIDUAL WHO DID NOT CARE FOR THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS WHOM HE REPRESENTED AND WAS WILLING TO URGE OTHERS TO IMPOSE TRADE SANCTIONS AGAINST MALAYSIA.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID -D-PROGRESS WAS ACHIEVED BECAUSE OF THE PREVAILING PEACE AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRY WHICH WERE AMONG THE VITAL FACTORS TOWARDS ENSURING PROGRESS.

ON A GLOBAL LEVEL, MALAYSIA PLAYED ITS ROLE AT INTERNATIONAL FORUMS WITH SINCERITY, DEDICATION AND COURAGE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

+WE HAVE AIRD OUR VIEWS AND OPINIONS ON ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES IN A CLEAR AND COMPREHENSIVE MANNER. OUR STAND HAS BEEN RESPECTED BY OTHER COUNTRIES INCLUDING THE BIG AND DEVELOPED NATIONS,+ HE SAID.

AMONG THOSE PRESENT WERE NEGERI SEMBILAN MENTERI BESAR DATUK HAJI MOHAMAD ISA ABDUL SAMAD AND HEADS OF BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES. -- BERNAMA

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