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U E559 AAE
MAHATHIR R'R'R'
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 31, (BERNAMA) -- ~~DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR~~
MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN THE COUNTRY SHOULD
TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP THE
SILENT MAJORITY.

THIS SHOULD BE ENSURED SO THAT THEIR INTEREST WAS NOT THREATENED
BY GROUPS OR BODIES WHICH MAKE UP THE ACTIVIST MINORITY.

+WE PRACTISE FREEDOM WHICH BRING BENEFITS FOR ALL THE PEOPLE AND
THEREFORE, THE FREEDOM PRACTISED BY AN INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP
SHOULD NOT THREATEN THE PROSPERITY OF THE PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

MALAYSIA COULD NOT ACCEPT FREEDOM THAT WAS PRACTISED BY SEVERAL
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AS THE PEOPLE MIGHT BECOME VICTIMS OF
+IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS+ OF THESE COUNTRIES WHICH WERE TAKEN IN THE
NAME OF FREEDOM,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID WHEN OPENING THE 35TH
MCA ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT DEWAN SAN CHOON HERE.

+THE PEOPLE ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY WITH PROPER
BOUNDARIES SO THAT THE INTEREST OF THE MAJORITY IS PROTECTED WITHOUT
IGNORING THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF THE MINORITY GROUPS WHICH
STRICTLY ADHERED TO DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
1310MST 31 07 88

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MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS BARISAN NASIONAL (BN) CHAIRMAN,
SAID THAT IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY LIKE MALAYSIA, MANY SENSITIVE
MATTERS HAD TO BE OVERCOME VERY DIPLOMATICALLY AND SINCERELY SO THAT
THEY WERE NOT EXPLOITED TO CREATE PROBLEMS.

IT WAS BECAUSE OF THIS THAT THE BN PREFERRED TO DISCUSS
SENSITIVE MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS AND IN AN ORDERLY MANNER TO
REACH AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD NOT FAVOUR ANY ONE SIDE AND WAS
ACCEPTABLE TO BY THE MAJORITY.

THE MAJORITY SYSTEM COULD NOT BE USED BECAUSE REPRESENTATIVES IN
THE BN ARE NOT BASED ON THE PERCENTAGE OF THEIR REPRESENTATION OF
THE PEOPLE, HE SAID, STRESSING THAT THE PRACTICE OF DIPLOMACY AND
CONSENSUS HAD BEEN USED SUCCESSFULLY TO HANDLE SENSITIVE MATTERS.

+IF WE ARE PATIENT AND WORK TOWARDS A COMPROMISE, WE CAN FINALLY
ARRIVE AT A MATURED DECISION. WE SHOULD CONTINUE USING WAYS AND
CHANNELS WHICH WE HAVE CREATED TO OVERCOME MATTERS FOR THE INTEREST
OF THE PEOPLE AND THE COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

ON THE NATION'S ECONOMY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID OVER THE
LAST TWO YEARS, THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS ENCOURAGING. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'

HE URGED EVERYONE TO ENSURE THAT THE NATION'S ECONOMY CONTINUED TO RECOVER AND SAID THEY SHOULD NOT CARRY OUT ACTIONS WHICH COULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THREATEN THE ECONOMY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID AT PRESENT, THE PRICES OF COMMODITIES AND EXPORTS, PARTICULARLY ELECTRONICS PARTS AND TEXTILES, HAD INCREASED AND THAT MANUFACTURED GOODS WERE THE BIGGEST EXPORTS LAST YEAR.

HOWEVER, SOME GROUPS CLAIMED THAT THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY RESULTED NOT BECAUSE OF GOOD GOVERNMENT PLANNING BUT SOLELY BECAUSE OF GREATER DEMAND FOR COMMODITIES OVERSEAS, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT MANY COUNTRIES DID NOT BENEFIT FROM THE INCREASE IN COMMODITY PRICES BECAUSE THE SITUATION IN THESE COUNTRIES DID NOT ALLOW THIS.

+BECAUSE WE MANAGED OUR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS CAREFULLY, WERE THRIFT IN OUR SPENDING AND ENHANCED OUR PRODUCTIVITY, WE ARE NOW ABLE TO ENJOY THE FRUITS OF THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY,+ HE SAID.

+AT ONE TIME DURING THE GLOBAL RECESSION, DEMAND FOR MALAYSIA'S GOODS DROPPED BUT OUR ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS NOT AS BAD AS THAT OF SOME COUNTRIES WHICH HAD SPENT LAVISHLY WHEN THEY WERE DOING WELL,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT WITH EFFICIENT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, MALAYSIA HAD ALSO MANAGED TO REPAY ITS DEBTS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE. -- BERNAMA
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