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MAHATHIR-UMNO R R R
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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 28 (BERNAMA) -- UMNO CAME INTO EXISTENCE NOT JUST FOR POLITICS BUT TO SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS AND IMPROVE THE STANDING OF THE MALAYS, ISLAM AND COUNTRY, ITS PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

+UMNO AND ITS POLITICAL STRUGGLE ARE THE INSTRUMENT AND MACHINERY TO ACHIEVE THE AIMS WE HAVE SET OUT,+ THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS WHEN OPENING THE THREE-DAY UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE (PWTC) HERE.

USING THE THEME +UMNO IS UMNO+, HE SAID IN TERMS OF THE SPIRIT, STRUGGLE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP, THE UMNO CONVENED TODAY IS TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES THE UMNO FORMED ON MAY 11 1946 IN ISTANA BESAR JOHOR BAHRU.

HIS STATEMENT WAS GREETED BY THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE BY MORE THAN 5,000 PEOPLE PACKING THE DENAM MERDEKA, THE VENUE OF THE ASSEMBLY. THEY INCLUDED 1,545 DELEGATES, 2,262 OFFICIAL OBSERVERS AND INVITED GUESTS SUCH AS HEADS OF OTHER BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES AND HEADS OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: +THIS UMNO IS THE UMNO THAT HAS REPRESENTED THE MALAYS SINCE 1946,+ THAT IS, THE PARTY THAT OPPOSED THE MALAYAN UNION, FOUGHT FOR FOR AND OBTAINED INDEPENDENCE FOR THE COUNTRY AND THE RIGHTS DUE TO AN INDEPENDENT PEOPLE, AND SUCCEEDED IN GETTING THE MALAYS RECOGNISED AS THE BUMIPUTERA (INDIGENOUS) COMMUNITY HAVING A SPECIFIC PLACE IN THIS COUNTRY. -- MORE
1112MST 28 10 88

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE FIRST AMENDMENT EMPOWERED THE PRESIDENT TO APPOINT THE SECRETARY, TREASURER AND FIVE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE (NOW SUPREME COUNCIL) TO ENSURE ADMINISTRATION AT CENTRAL LEVEL WAS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE PRESIDENT WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

THE CONSTITUTION WAS AMENDED AGAIN TO DO AWAY WITH STATE LEVEL PARTY MOVEMENTS SO DIVISIONS CAME UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE CENTRAL UMNO AND LIAISED DIRECTLY WITH IT, WHILE THE STATE LIAISON COMMITTEES, BEREFT OF EXECUTIVE POWERS, ACTED ONLY AS COORDINATORS OF DIVISIONAL LEVEL ACTIVITIES.

DESPITE THE MANY AMENDMENTS TO THE UMNO CONSTITUTION SINCE THE TIME OF DATO OMN, THE ESSENCE OF THE PARTY SPIRIT, ASPIRATIONS AND STRUGGLE NEVER CHANGED, HE SAID.

THE DEPARTURE OF DATO OMN AND ITS FOLLOWERS FROM THE PARTY AND THE EXPULSION OF SEVERAL LEADERS BY THE PRESIDENT DID NOT AFFECT THE PARTY, HE ADDED.

AMONG THE EXPELLED LEADERS (WHEN THE TUNKU WAS HEADING UMNO) WERE ENCIK AZIZ ISHAK, A CABINET MINISTER AT THAT TIME, AND KHATIJAH SIDER, THE KAUM IBU (WOMEN'S WING) CHIEF.

+I MYSELF WAS EXPELLED FROM THE SUPREME COUNCIL AND PARTY, NOT BECAUSE I DID NOT SUPPORT THE PARTY BUT BECAUSE I CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP AT THAT TIME,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID. -- MORE

1143MST 28 10 88

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B E975 AAE
MAHATHIR-UMNO 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR STRESSED NO ONE COULD SAY UMNO WAS NO LONGER UMNO BECAUSE OF AMENDMENTS TO ITS CONSTITUTION AND EXPULSION OF MEMBERS.

+UMNO MEMBERS, MALAYS, FRIENDS AND FOES OF THE PARTY AND THE PEOPLE IN GENERAL HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED AND ACCEPTED UMNO, BEFORE AND AFTER ANY CHANGES OR ACTIONS MADE BY UMNO ITSELF,+ HE ADDED.

THE PARTY PRESIDENT SAID DRAGGING UMNO TO COURT LEADING TO IT BEING DECLARED UNLAWFUL AND TARNISHING ITS IMAGE WERE ACTIONS THAT HAD NEVER CROSSED THE MINDS OF PARTY MEMBERS BEFORE.

+UMNO IN FACT DID HAVE ILLEGAL BRANCHES SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1946,+ HE SAID.

BUT THE MATTER DID NOT BECOME A PROBLEM BECAUSE MEMBERS WERE LOYAL TO THE PARTY AND ITS CAUSE, AND RESOLVED VIOLATIONS OF ITS CONSTITUTION THROUGH THE PARTY MACHINERY, IN PARTICULAR THE DISCIPLINARY BUREAU AND SUPREME COUNCIL, HE ADDED.

TAKING UMNO TO COURT COULD ONLY HAPPEN WHEN THE PARTY WAS +INFILTRATED+ BY PEOPLE WHO HAD ONLY THEIR OWN INTERESTS AT HEART AND WERE NOT LOYAL TO IT AND DID NOT POSSESS THE MALAY SPIRIT. -- MORE

1201MST 28 10 88

B E987 AAE
MAHATHIR-UMNO 4 KUALA LUMPUR

THE SUPREME COUNCIL'S EFFORTS TO HAVE THE MATTER SETTLED OUT OF COURT AND THROUGH DISCUSSIONS MET WITH FAILURE.

THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE PAID NO HEED TO WARNINGS THAT THEIR ACTION COULD CAUSE UMNO TO BE RULED UNLAWFUL, BEING PREOCCUPIED ONLY WITH FORGING FRESH SUPREME COUNCIL ELECTIONS, HE SAID.

THE APRIL 24 1987 ELECTIONS AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAD ALREADY AFFECTED UNITY IN UMNO AND FRESH ELECTIONS WOULD ONLY LEAD TO MORE INTENSE COMPETITION AND WORSEN THE DISUNITY, HE SAID.

BUT BECAUSE THEY WERE IMPATIENT TO WREST THE PARTY LEADERSHIP AND NOT WILLING TO WAIT TWO YEARS FOR THE NEXT ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS, THEY PROCEEDED WITH THEIR CASE IN COURT.

AFTER THE COURT RULED UMNO TO BE AN UNLAWFUL SOCIETY, THEY QUICKLY TRIED TO ESTABLISH +UMNO MALAYSIA+ TO REPLACE THE UNLAWFUL PARTY WITHOUT FIRST MAKING EFFORTS TO APPEAL TO THE SUPREME COURT AGAINST THE DECISION. +AT THAT TIME, THERE WAS NO MENTION OF THE SPIRIT OF '46.+

UNFORTUNATELY FOR THESE PEOPLE, THE +UMNO MALAYSIA+ SPONSORED BY THEM FAILED TO GET REGISTERED BECAUSE THE REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES HAD NOT YET STRUCK OUT THE NAME OF THE ORIGINAL UMNO, HE SAID. THE SAME FATE HAPPENED TO THE SUPREME COUNCIL'S APPLICATION TO SET UP +UMNO 88.+ -- MORE

1311MST 28 10 88

B E989 AAE
MAHATHIR-UMNO 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ADDITION OF THE WORD +BARU+ TO THE PARTY NAME DID NOT AFFECT UMNO'S CONTINUITY AND STRUGGLE.

THE GOVERNMENT OF WHICH UMNO FORMS THE PILLAR WAS NOT AFFECTED AND THE PARTY'S ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES REMAINED UMNO AND BARISAN NASIONAL MEMBERS.

+IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER UMNO'S DE-REGISTRATION WAS CAUSED NOT BY THE EXISTENCE OF ILLEGAL BRANCHES BUT THE COURT ACTION,+ HE SAID.

ACCORDING TO HIM, PARTY HEADQUARTERS STUDIED THE FILES FOR 1984 AND FOUND 3,000 BRANCHES HAD NOT BEEN REGISTERED SINCE 1966 BUT UMNO DID NOT BECOME UNLAWFUL BECAUSE THERE NO MEMBERS THEN WHO BROUGHT IT TO COURT.

WITH THE RE-REGISTRATION OF UMNO, ALL LEGAL OBSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN SURMOUNTED AND UMNO COULD CONTINUE TO FUNCTION AS USUAL.

THE PRIME MINISTER HIT OUT AT THE GROUP OPPOSING UMNO, SAYING THEY HAD NO HESITATION TURNING TRAITORS TO OPPOSE THE BN GOVERNMENT AFTER FAILING TO WIN OVER THE MAJORITY OF UMNO MEMBERS TO THEIR SIDE.

THEIR ACTIONS HAD BRIGHTENED PROSPECTS FOR THE OPPOSITION DAP AND PAS, HE ADDED. -- MORE

1313MST 28 10 88 .

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B E990 AAE
MAHATHIR-UMNO 6 KUALA LUMPUR

THE DAP, HE SAID, HAD NEVER SUBSCRIBED TO THE RACIAL BALANCE AND NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) OBJECTIVES AND WERE FAST FOES OF THE MALAY LEADERSHIP AND UMNO.

IT CAPITALISED ON THE DISUNITY AMONG MALAYS TO FURTHER ITS AIM TO GAIN +DOMINANCE+ AND ACTIVELY COOPERATED WITH AND SUPPORTED THE UMNO SPLINTER GROUP TO WEAKEN UMNO, THE BN GOVERNMENT AND THE POSITION OF THE MALAYS.

IF THE SPLINTER GROUP REALLY BELIEVED IN DEMOCRACY THEY WOULD RESPECT THE DECISION OF THE MAJORITY. IT WAS UNDEMOCRATIC AND UNNATURAL FOR A MINORITY GROUP TO FORCE THE MAJORITY TO ACCEPT THEIR LEADERSHIP, HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON THE GROUP'S CLAIM THAT THEY WERE DROPPED FROM THE CABINET BECAUSE THEY DID NOT SUPPORT THE PRESENT UMNO LEADERSHIP, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THIS WAS NOT OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

THE LATE DATO ONN, DATO PANGLINA BUKIT SANTANG, DATO ZAINAL ABIDIN, TAN SRI MIK AHMAD KAMIL AND SEVERAL OTHER FOUNDERS OF THE PARTY WERE NOT ACCEPTED AS CABINET MEMBERS WHEN MALAYA BECAME INDEPENDENT BECAUSE THEY WERE REJECTED BY THE MAJORITY IN UMNO.

WHEN THE LATE TAN SRI MIK KAMIL AND TAN SRI C.M YUSOF RETURNED TO UMNO, THEY WERE ONLY GIVEN DEWAN RAKYAT SPEAKER POSTS.

HE SAID FORMER PRIME MINISTER TUN HUSSEIN ONN ONLY JOINED THE CABINET WHEN THE LATE TUN ABDUL RAZAK BECAME PRIME MINISTER. TUN RAZAK ALSO DROPPED SOME LEADERS FROM THE CABINET BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT GET ALONG WITH HIM.

WHEN TUN HUSSEIN TOOK OVER AS PRIME MINISTER, DATUK HARUN IORIS WAS REMOVED AS SELANGOR MENTERI BESAR. -- MORE
1326MST 28 10 88

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B E991 AAE
MAHATHIR-UMNO 7 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE UMNO LEADERSHIP DID NOT WANT TO SEE MALAY DISUNITY CONTINUE, AND WAS WILLING TO HAVE TALKS WITH ANYBODY TO REUNITE THE MALAYS.

UMNO DID NOT WANT MALAYS TO BECOME WEAK AND MADE USE OF TO EFFECT THEIR OWN DOWNFALL.

+WE THINK, IN FACT WE BELIEVE, MALAY UNITY AND POLITICAL STRENGTH ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE STABILITY AND SUCCESS OF THE COUNTRY,+ HE ADDED.

EMPHASISING THAT UMNO WANTS MALAYS TO BE UNITED, HE SAID ALL EFFORTS MUST BE MADE TO FURTHER CONSOLIDATE THE POLITICAL POWER OF THE MALAYS.

UMNO WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT MEMBERS OF PSRM, PAS AND THE DAP AND ANY OTHER MALAYS IF THEY APPLIED TO JOIN AND WERE WILLING TO SUBSCRIBE TO PARTY POLICIES AND STRUGGLES.

ALL THOSE JOINING UMNO WOULD HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS ACCORDED THEM BY THE PARTY CONSTITUTION BUT THE RIGHTS MUST BE USED WITH A FULL SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY.

THE MALAYS, THE PRIME MINISTER CAUTIONED, WERE NOT YET HOME FREE, AND THEIR PROGRESS HAD STILL TO REACH A SATISFACTORY LEVEL.

+WE ARE STILL FACING A MAJOR CHALLENGE IN MAKING THE MALAYS A RACE RESPECTED AND HONOURED IN A WORLD FULL OF TRIALS AND CHALLENGES.+ -- BERNAMA

1343MST 28 10 88