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MAHATHIR-UMNO

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KUALA LUMPUR, FEB 5⁸⁸ (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE CURRENT PREDICAMENT FACED BY UMNO WILL BE RESOLVED AND HE IS CONFIDENT THE SPIRIT OF PARTY MEMBERS WILL REMAIN INTACT IRRESPECTIVE OF ITS POSITION.

HE TOLD A PACKED PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT HERE THAT HE HAD MANY OPTIONS ON WHAT TO DO NEXT BUT WAS RELUCTANT TO REVEAL THEM, ADDING THAT HE WOULD DO SO +IN DUE COURSE.+

HE REJECTED A SUGGESTION THAT YESTERDAY'S KUALA LUMPUR HIGH COURT RULING OF UMNO BEING AN UNLAWFUL SOCIETY WAS A MAJOR CRISIS FOR THE PARTY.

+IT IS NOT A CRISIS. IT IS JUST A TECHNICAL MATTER,+ HE DECLARED.

BUT HE SAID THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WOULD NOT BE AS SIMPLE AS WRITING A FEW LETTERS TO THE REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES TO SET THE PROCESS OF RE-REGISTRATION OF THE PARTY GOING.

+HOWEVER, IT IS NOT SO DIFFICULT A PROBLEM THAT WE CANNOT RESOLVE IT.+

THE HIGH COURT RULED UMNO WAS AN UNLAWFUL SOCIETY WHEN IT HELD ITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ELECTIONS LAST APRIL BECAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF UNAPPROVED BRANCHES AT THAT TIME. -- MORE
1453MST 05 02 88

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 2 KUALA LUMPUR

IT MADE THE RULING IN DISMISSING A SUIT FILED BY 11 UMNO MEMBERS CHALLENGING THE VALIDITY OF THE APRIL 24 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ELECTIONS.

JUSTICE DATUK HARUN HASHIM IN DELIVERING JUDGMENT SAID HE DID NOT HAVE TO DECLARE THE ASSEMBLY AND ELECTIONS NULL AND VOID BECAUSE +IT WAS A NULLITY ALL THE WAY.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REPEATEDLY MENTIONED THAT FOLLOWING THE COURT DECISION, UMNO NO LONGER EXISTS.

+WHAT IS OBVIOUS IS THAT THERE EXISTS IN UMNO PEOPLE WHO WISH TO DESTROY THE PARTY AND PERHAPS THEY MAY TAKE PLEASURE IN SEEING UMNO IN THIS PREDICAMENT.+

ASKED HIS FIRST REACTION TO THE COURT DECISION, HE SAID: +I SEE 11 PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST UMNO AND AS A RESULT, THEIR ACTION HAS DESTROYED UMNO COMPLETELY+. -- MORE
1559MST 05 02 88

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 3 KUALA LUMPUR

ASKED ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH MEMBERS AND THE VIEW THAT UMNO HAD CLOSED RANKS SINCE LAST YEAR'S PARTY ELECTIONS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: + IF YOU LINE UP THE 1.4 MILLION MEMBERS OF UMNO, IT WILL FORM A VERY LONG RANK. THERE ARE BOUND TO BE A FEW BLACK SHEEP, PEOPLE WHO ARE FRUSTRATED AND WHO WANT POSITIONS BUT COULD NOT GET THEM AND SINCE THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO GET THEM, THEY WANT TO DESTROY WHAT THEY COULD NOT GET.+

+WHAT WE ARE SEEING TODAY IS THE RESULT OF THE AMBITIONS OF SOME PEOPLE AND SINCE THEY FAILED (TO GET WHAT THEY WANT) THEY PREFER TO DESTROY,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE FORMED TO SETTLE THE MATTER OUT OF COURT TRIED ITS BEST BUT THE GROUP OF 11 MEMBERS WERE ADAMANT IN TAKING THE MATTER TO COURT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID PROBLEMS WITHIN THE PARTY COULD BE SETTLED IF MEMBERS LOVED THE PARTY BUT IF THEY HAD SELFISH PERSONAL INTERESTS +THINGS WOULD BE DIFFICULT.+

RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ON WHOSE AMBITIONS THE 11 MEMBERS REPRESENTED SINCE THEY THEMSELVES WERE ONLY ORDINARY MEMBERS OR BRANCH HEADS, HE SAID: +YOU ARE ENTITLED TO MAKE YOUR OWN JUDGMENT.+

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 4 KUALA LUMPUR

WHEN REPORTERS PERSISTED IN ASKING THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT THE OPTIONS HE WOULD TAKE, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF FORMING A NEW PARTY IN PLACE OF UMNO, AND HOW MUCH TIME HE WOULD NEED TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM, HE SAID ALL AVENUES WOULD BE EXPLORED TO FIND THE BEST SOLUTION.

HE ADDED THE PROBLEM WAS A LESSON TO ALL PARTIES IN THE CHOICE OF THEIR MEMBERS.

+THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS FOR UMNO TO ACCEPT MEMBERS WHO POSSESS THE SPIRIT WHICH HAD MADE THE PARTY WHAT IT USED TO BE. THE DIGNITY OF UMNO IS UNTARNISHED AND WE CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON THAT, EVEN IF YOU RUB OUT THE NAME OR CALL IT BY ANY OTHER NAME.+

ON THE COURT DECISION WHICH IMPLIED THE COUNTRY'S DOMINANT RULING PARTY IS UNLAWFUL, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REMARKED: +WELL, IF THE LAW SAYS SO AND THE COURT INTERPRETS SO, WHAT IS THERE FOR ME TO SAY?+

ASKED HIS MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE TO PREVENT CONFUSION, HE SAID: +WE WILL EXPLAIN TO THE PEOPLE IN OUR OWN WAY AND I THINK THEY WILL NOT BE UNDULY DISTURBED ABOUT IT.+ -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-UMNO 5 KUALA LUMPUR

ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD GO ROUND THE COUNTRY TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO THE PEOPLE, HE REPLIED: +MAYBE, BUT WE CAN'T MEET AS UMNO BECAUSE UMNO IS UNLAWFUL.+

REITERATING THAT THIS WAS NO CRISIS, HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE FUTURE OF UMNO ONCE REVIVED WOULD BE +AS BRIGHT AS THOSE LAMPS+, POINTING TO THE HIGH-VOLTAGE TELEVISION LIGHTS IN THE ROOM.

TO A SUGGESTION THAT AT THIS POINT, THE REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES HAD NOT DEREGISTERED UMNO, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: +I UNDERSTAND THAT THE REGISTRAR WILL HAVE TO TAKE COGNIZANCE OF THE COURT DECISION.+ -- BERNAMA

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