

0612

R E395 AAE
MAHATHIR-MUSA
BM

JOHOR BAHRU, AUG 22, (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TONIGHT REFUTED THE ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST HIM BY DATUK MUSA HITAM, DESCRIBING THEM AS MERE LIES.

THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS SADNESS AND REGRET THAT HE HAD BEEN MADE THE MAIN TARGET IN WHAT HE SAID WAS A MESSAGE BY DATUK MUSA. THE MESSAGE WAS CONTAINED IN A VIDEO RECORDING USED AS A CAMPAIGN MATERIAL BY DATUK SHAHRIR ABDUL SAMAD, THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE IN THE JOHOR BAHRU PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION.

AS HE REPLIED TO EACH OF THE RECORDED ALLEGATIONS BY DATUK MUSA, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR RECOLLECTED THE MOMENTS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP, FROM THE TIME BOTH WERE EXPELLED FROM UMNO UNTIL THE LAST HARI RAYA PUASA.

ADDRESSING ABOUT 1,000 ELECTION WORKERS AND PARTY SUPPORTERS HERE, HE OPENLY REVEALED DATUK MUSA'S ACTIONS WHILE HE WAS STILL IN THE GOVERNMENT AND AFTER HE HAD LEFT.

+I STILL REGARD HIM (DATUK MUSA) AS A FRIEND, IN POLITICS WE FIGHT, AND WHY TARNISH MY NAME IN A BY-ELECTION TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE?+ HE ASKED.

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0043MST 23 08 88

0617

R E399 AAE
MAHATHIR-MUSA 2 JOHOR BAHRU

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IN THE VIDEO, WHICH HE WATCHED TODAY, DATUK MUSA ACCUSED HIM OF BEING A DICTATOR, UNWILLING TO COMPROMISE AND HAVING TURNED DOWN HIS (DATUK MUSA) REQUEST TO BRING HIS FRIENDS TO SRI PERDANA DURING THE LAST HARI RAYA PUASA.

IN THE VIDEO, DATUK MUSA ALSO ALLEGED THAT A SIGNIFICANT QUESTION IN THE BY-ELECTION WAS DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR'S LEADERSHIP, WHICH ACCORDING TO HIM WAS LEANING TOWARDS A DICTATORIAL TREND.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID DATUK MUSA, IN THE RECORDING, ALSO CALLED ON ALL THE VOTERS IN JOHOR BAHRU TO SERVE THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE WARNING TO THE PRIME MINISTER TO SHOW THEIR HATRED FOR HIS LEADERSHIP.

HE DENIED ALL THE CHARGES MADE BY THE FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, SAYING THAT ALL THE THINGS THAT DATUK MUSA SAID WERE MERE LIES.

+I KNOW WHAT I AM SAYING AND I AM PREPARED TO SWEAR BY THE QURAN IN THE MOSQUE,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

0142MST 23 08 88

0615

R E597 AAE
MAHATHIR-MUSA 3 JOHOR BAHRU

EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR RECALLED HOW HE FIRST MET DATUK MUSA, WHO WAS THEN UMNO EXECUTIVE SECRETARY.

+I WAS GOOD WITH HIM BECAUSE WE SHARED THE SAME VIEWS. THAT WAS WHY WE WERE COMPATIBLE THEN.+

HE ALSO RECALLED HOW ONE DAY IN 1981 DATUK MUSA WENT TO HIS HOUSE ASKING FOR HIS SUPPORT IN HIS FIGHT AGAINST TENGKU RAZALEIGH HANZAH FOR THE UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENCY.

+SINCE TENGKU RAZALEIGH AT THAT TIME HAD 'AN OFFENCE' IN THAT HE HAD ASKED THE PEOPLE OF KELANTAN NOT TO SUPPORT ME, I CONSENTED TO HIS (DATUK MUSA) REQUEST AND PROMISED TO HELP HIM BUT NOT OPENLY. I ALSO ASKED MY SUPPORTERS TO SUPPORT HIM, WHICH MADE POSSIBLE HIS VICTORY.+

+DURING THE 1984 PARTY ELECTION, HE CONTESTED THE POST AGAIN AND I OPENLY SUPPORTED HIM. IN THE PRESIDENTIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS, I THANKED THE DELEGATES FOR GIVING ME A FRIEND WHO COULD WORK WITH ME.+ -- MORE

0107MST 23 08 88

0616

R E598 AAE
MAHATHIR-MUSA 4 JOHOR BAHRU

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE HAD THEN THOUGHT THAT HE HAD FOUND SOMEONE TO BE HIS SUCCESSOR. +AFTER 1984, DATUK MUSA WAS ANGRY WITH ME BECAUSE I DID NOT REMOVE TENGKU RAZALEIGH FROM THE CABINET. BECAUSE OF THAT, DATUK MUSA RESIGNED (IN 1986). I DID NOT SACK HIM.+

ON DATUK MUSA'S CLAIM THAT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS A DICTATOR SO MUCH SO THAT ONLY HE (PRIME MINISTER) COULD SPEAK IN CABINET OR UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEETINGS, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID: +YOU CAN ASK ANY CABINET MINISTER OR UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEMBER.+

HE ALSO REFUTED DATUK MUSA'S NOTION THAT THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS DID NOT MEAN THAT DEMOCRACY STILL PREVAILED IN THE COUNTRY.

+IN THIS COUNTRY, ELECTIONS CAN BE HELD NOT ONLY TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES BUT WE WILL ALSO ENTERTAIN THOSE TO FOOL AROUND AS BEING DONE BY DATUK SHAHRIR,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

0115MST 23 08 88

0618

R E600 AAE
MAHATHIR-MUSA 5 JOHOR BAHRU

ON CLAIMS BY DATUK MUSA THAT THE FUTURE TREND OF HIS (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR) LEADERSHIP WAS HEADING TOWARDS A DICTATORSHIP, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID: +I AM NOW 63 YEARS OLD, WHEN HE SAID FUTURE TREND DOES HE MEAN A YEAR, 10 YEARS OR 15 YEARS?+

ON THE REMOVAL OF TUN MOHAMED SALLEH ABAS AS THE LORD PRESIDENT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID TUN SALLEH'S ALLEGATIONS DID NOT INVOLVE HIM BUT THE RULERS.+

+DATUK MUSA ALLEGED THAT IF I CAN REMOVE JUDGES, I CAN ALSO REMOVE THE RULERS.+

+I REMEMBER DATUK MUSA'S STAND IN THE 1983 CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS DURING WHICH HE HAD SHOWN HIS HATRED FOR THE RULERS, ONE IN PARTICULAR, BUT HE HAS BRANDED ME AS TRYING TO TOPPLE THE RULERS.+

ON HIS STERNNESS, WHICH WAS ALSO RAISED BY DATUK MUSA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A LEADER SHOULD BE FIRM, ABLE TO STAND BY HIS WORDS AND NOT BE EASILY INFLUENCED. -- MORE
0147MST 23 08 88

0619

R E601 AAE
MAHATHIR-MUSA 6 JOHOR BAHRU

ON THE ALLEGATION THAT HE TURNED DOWN DATUK MUSA'S REQUEST TO BRING +HIS FRIENDS+ TO VISIT HIM DURING THE LAST HARI RAYA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THIS WAS NOT TRUE. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE DID TURN DOWN DATUK MUSA'S REQUEST FOR HIS SUPPORTERS TO BE GIVEN BACK PARTY POSTS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID HE DID NOT DENY THAT TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN WAS AN INDEPENDENCE FIGHTER AND HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE COUNTRY, EVEN THOUGH HE AND THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER HAD DIFFERENCES OF OPINIONS. -- BERNAMA
0157MST 23 08 88