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MAHATHIR-PEOPLE
BM

JOHOR BAHRU, AUG 23 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY URGED THE PEOPLE NOT TO GET INFLUENCED BY THE HATE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE LEADERSHIP LAUNCHED BY CERTAIN GROUPS BUT TURN THEIR ATTENTION TO MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS.

AT A MEETING WITH THE MALAY COMMUNITY HERE, THE PRIME MINISTER SPOKE OF THREE MAJOR FACTORS HE SAID THE PEOPLE SHOULD GIVE ATTENTION TO:

- + UNITY OF THE MALAYS,
- + COOPERATION BETWEEN MALAYS AND THE OTHER RACES FOR GREATER HARMONY IN THE COUNTRY AND
- + STRENGTHENING RESOLVE TO CONTINUE DEVELOPING MALAYSIA FOR THE PEOPLE'S OWN BENEFIT.

ON THE JOHOR BAHRU PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION HERE, HE SAID DEVELOPMENT OF THIS TOWN WOULD CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN ATTENTION BY THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS IF BARISAN NASIONAL RETAINED THE SEAT.

+BUT I CANNOT GIVE AN ASSURANCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL ASSIST DATUK SHAHRIR ABDUL SAMAD (THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE) AND (ABDUL) RAZAK AHMAD (THE PARTAI SOSIALIS RAKYAT MALAYSIA (PSRM) CANDIDATE) IF EITHER WINS THE SEAT,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

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IN HIS SPEECH, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AGAIN EXPLAINED THE ACTUAL SITUATION IN CONNECTION WITH CRITICISMS MADE AGAINST HIM BY FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK MUSA MITAM AND RETRACED EVENTS THAT LED TO THE OLD UMNO'S DISSOLUTION.

THE PRIME MINISTER HAD YESTERDAY REPLIED TO DATUK MUSA'S ACCUSATIONS CONTAINED IN A VIDEO TAPE RECORDING USED BY DATUK SHAHRIR IN HIS CAMPAIGN IN THE BY-ELECTION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ALTHOUGH THE COUNTRY HAD ATTAINED INDEPENDENCE, MALAY UNITY SHOULD STILL BE MAINTAINED BECAUSE +WE ARE STILL WEAK.+

+BECAUSE OF THIS, WE ARE ALWAYS EXHORTING THE MALAYS TO UNITE. UNFORTUNATELY, THERE WAS A SPLIT, RESULTING IN THE FORMATION OF PAS BY A SPLINTER GROUP THAT WAS ONCE PART OF US.

+NOW THE DISUNITY INVOLVES RELIGIOUS PRACTICES TO THE EXTENT OF THEM NOT CONSIDERING MUSLIMS AMONG THE MALAYS AS OF THE SAME RELIGION BECAUSE THERE AROSE CONTROVERSIES LIKE THE TWO-IMAM, TWO-MOSQUE, TWO-GRAVE ISSUES,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-PEOPLE 3 JOHOR BAHARU

+IN FACT, THIS SHOULD BE A LESSON FOR US NOT TO FALL INTO
DISUNITY AS IT WILL ONLY WEAKEN US.

+UNFORTUNATELY, EFFORTS TO DIVIDE US ARE STILL CONTINUING,+ HE
SAID, ADDING THAT DISUNITY IN UMNO OCCURRED BECAUSE OF POWER GRAB
BIDS.

ON DATUK SHAHRIR, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE FORMER
MINISTER HAD ONCE INSULTED HIM (THE PRIME MINISTER) FOR CRITICISING
THE POOR CLEANLINESS CONDITIONS AT THE JOHOR CAUSEWAY SEVERAL YEARS
AGO.

+HE WAS ANGRY AND SAID I PURPOSELY WANTED TO HUMILIATE HIM BY
MAKING THE REMARK IN HIS (PARLIAMENTARY) CONSTITUENCY,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE NEVER INTENDED TO HUMILIATE DATUK
SHAHRIR AND HIS VISIT TO THE CUSTOMS CHECKPOINT AT THE JOHOR
CAUSEWAY, WHICH WAS UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FINANCE
MINISTRY, WAS TO ENSURE +CLEANLINESS IS MAINTAINED AT THE GATEWAY
INTO THE COUNTRY.+ -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-PEOPLE 4 JOHOR BAHARU

ON DATUK SHAHRIR NOT BEING RE-APPOINTED HEAD OF THE JOHOR BAHARU
UMNO BARU DIVISION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THIS WAS BECAUSE HE
HAD NOT WORKED HARD IN THE TANJUNG PUTERI BY-ELECTION IN MARCH.

(DATUK SHAHRIR WAS THE BARISAN NASIONAL DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
IN THE BY-ELECTION WON BY THE BN BY A NARROW MARGIN).

HOWEVER, HE SAID UMNO WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT DATUK SHAHRIR AS AN
ORDINARY MEMBER. -- BERNAMA

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