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UMNO-MUSA

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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 15 (BERNAMA) -- THE PRIME MINISTER TODAY DESCRIBED AS +BASELESS AND MISCHIEVOUS+ A STATEMENT FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK MUSA HITAM MADE IN HONG KONG RECENTLY, AND SAID IT WAS IMPROPER FOR A PERSON WHO HAS A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HIS COUNTRY TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE STATEMENT WAS AIMED AT AROUSING RESTIVENESS AMONG THE PEOPLE SOLELY TO SUBVERT NATIONAL STABILITY AND CAUSE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE NATION'S INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS CLIMATE.

+THE STATEMENT CAN THREATEN NATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY AS IT CAN GENERATE UNEASE AMONG VISITORS AND INVESTORS, INCLUDING LOCAL INVESTORS,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING A FOUR-HOUR MEETING OF THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL HERE.

IN HIS SPEECH AT THE HONG KONG FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB ON WEDNESDAY, DATUK MUSA WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD CALL FOR A SNAP ELECTION WITHIN A YEAR AND HAVE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED IN THE COUNTRY IF HE APPEARED TO BE LOSING.

DATUK MUSA WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT BEFORE HAVING THE EMERGENCY DECLARED, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WOULD FIRST CREATE TROUBLE TO LEGITIMISE THE ACTION.

FOLLOWING THE SPEECH, DATUK MUSA WAS STRONGLY CRITICISED BY VARIOUS GROUPS, INCLUDING IN PARLIAMENT, FOR DAMAGING MALAYSIA'S IMAGE OVERSEAS. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL REGRETTED DATUK MUSA'S STATEMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON MALAYSIA'S INVESTMENT CLIMATE.

+THE ALLEGATION THAT SNAP POLLS WILL BE HELD WITHIN A YEAR WILL ONLY CREATE UNEASINESS AMONG BUSINESSMEN DURING THE PERIOD AND DOES NOT HELP ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID DATUK MUSA'S ALLEGATIONS THAT TROUBLE WOULD BE CREATED TO LEGITIMISE A PROCLAMATION OF EMERGENCY WERE BASELESS AND MISCHIEVOUS.

ON DATUK MUSA'S CLAIM THAT THE MCA HAD DEBATED PULLING OUT FROM THE BARISAN NASIONAL GOVERNMENT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MCA HAD ALREADY SAID IT HAD NO SUCH INTENTION.

TO A QUESTION, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID NO ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST DATUK MUSA BECAUSE +AS A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY, EVERYONE IS FREE TO EXPRESS HIS VIEWS.+

+WE ARE ONLY DISAPPOINTED WITH THE ACTION OF A PERSON WHO HAS JEOPARDISED NATIONAL INTERESTS BY DELIBERATELY PAINTING AN INACCURATE PICTURE OF STABILITY AND THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN THIS COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

-- BERNAMA

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