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MAHATHIR-SEMARAK R R R

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MARANG, OCT 20 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY REJECTED CLAIMS BY SOME GROUPS THAT THE HOLDING OF THE SEMARAK (LOYALTY WITH THE PEOPLE) MOVEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT IS A PREPARATION FOR FACING A GENERAL ELECTION.

HE SAID HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF HUMAN BEINGS WERE THE PEOPLE WHO WOULD RUN DOWN THEIR OWN COUNTRY BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD BY SPREADING STORIES THAT MALAYSIA WAS SUPPOSEDLY UNSTABLE AND THAT UNREST WOULD OCCUR AND RACIAL RIOTS BREAK OUT.

EVERY GATHERING ORGANISED BY THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE AIM OF BRINGING THE LEADERS AND PEOPLE CLOSER TOGETHER, FULFILLING THE ASPIRATIONS AND WISHES OF THE PEOPLE AS WELL AS ASSESSING THE CAPABILITIES OF LEADERS IN DISCHARGING THEIR DUTIES FOR THE PEOPLE'S WELLBEING.

LAUNCHING THE TERENGGANU LEVEL SEMARAK AT KAMPUNG KELULUT NEAR HERE, HE SAID: +WE ORGANISE GATHERINGS SUCH AS THE SEMARAK BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERS SHOWING THEIR LOYALTY TO THE PEOPLE, IN RETURN FOR THE LOYALTY THE PEOPLE GIVE TO THEM.+

ABOUT 40,000 PEOPLE TURNED UP FOR THE LAUNCH. TERENGGANU HENTERI BESAR TERENGGANU DATUK HAJI MAN MOKHTAR AHMAD, NEGERI SEMBILAN HENTERI BESAR DATUK HAJI MOHAMAD ISA SAMAD, PERLIS HENTERI BESAR DR ABUL HAKID PANAM TEH, INFORMATION MINISTER DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT, SEVERAL DEPUTY MINISTERS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE, BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTY LEADERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS WERE AMONG THOSE PRESENT. -- MORE  
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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID UNLIKE THE GOVERNMENT, SOME GROUPS ONLY GOT BUSY GOING HERE AND THERE TO MEET THE PEOPLE WHEN ELECTION TIME CAME AROUND WITH THE HOPE OF WINNING SUPPORT OR VOTES.

+WE HAVE THE SEMARAK NOT TO APPEAL FOR VOTES BUT TO ENABLE LEADERS TO MEET AND DELIVER THE MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE, AS WELL AS TO GET FRANK FEEDBACK FROM THEM.+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE TWO-WAY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEADERS AND PEOPLE WAS ESSENTIAL, ESPECIALLY IN A COUNTRY WHOSE POPULATION WAS MADE UP OF DIFFERENT RACES.

THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN PROVEN TO VERY EFFECTIVE IN BRINGING ABOUT DEVELOPMENT, WELLBEING AND HARMONY AMONG THE RACES, AND AVERTING CONFLICTS AMONG THE PEOPLE SUCH AS HAD HAPPENED IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITH A PLURAL SOCIETY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS REGRETTABLE THAT AT A TIME WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WAS WORKING HARD TO PLAN AND IMPLEMENT VARIOUS EFFORTS TO EXPEDITE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, A GROUP EMERGED TO WORK JUST AS HARD TO DIVIDE THE PEOPLE BY MAKING FALSE ACCUSATIONS THAT AROUSED THEIR EMOTIONS.

+THE GROUP IS TRYING TO UNDO ALL THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACHIEVED BY SPREADING LIES BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD, TO THE EXTENT OF CLAIMING THE COUNTRY IS UNSTABLE, UNREST WILL OCCUR AND RIOTS BREAK OUT AMONG THE RACES.+ HE ADDED.

ALL THE ACTIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP, HE SAID, HAD BUT ONE PURPOSE IN MIND -- TO DISCREDIT THEIR OWN COUNTRY TO SERVE SELFISH INTERESTS AND TAKE REVENGE FOR FAILING TO SECURE WHAT THEY ASPIRED FOR. -- MORE

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+IF THEY ARE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THE COUNTRY AND HAVE A PATRIOTIC SPIRIT, THEY WOULD HAVE PRAISED THEIR OWN COUNTRY, NO MATTER HOW BAD THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER HOWEVER FEELS ALL THEIR EFFORTS WOULD FAIL BECAUSE THE MAJORITY OF MALAYSIANS LOVED THEIR COUNTRY AND WOULD NOT BE EASILY INFLUENCED BY THEIR FALSE ACCUSATIONS AND PROPAGANDA.

THE GOVERNMENT ON ITS PART WOULD MAKE MORE EARNEST EFFORTS TO BRING THE LEADERS AND PEOPLE CLOSER TOGETHER FOR THE SAKE OF MAINTAINING PEACE, AND CONTINUE WITH DEVELOPMENT SO MALAYSIA AND ITS PEOPLE WOULD BE RESPECTED BY THE WORLD.

+WE WILL CONTINUE TO MEET THE PEOPLE, NOT WITH THE INTENTION OF RUNNING DOWN ANYBODY, BUT TO EXPEDITE THE PROCESS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO MAKE MALAYSIA A MORE PROGRESSIVE COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

THE ABUNDANCE OF THE COUNTRY'S NATURAL RESOURCES WOULD BE MEANINGLESS IF NOT EXPLOITED. IT WAS NO USE HAVING FERTILE SOIL IF IT WAS NOT CULTIVATED WITH CROPS AND IT WAS NO USE DISCOVERING GOLD IN THE STATES INCLUDING KELANTAN AND PAHANG IF THE DEPOSITS WERE NOT MINED.

ALL THIS WEALTH, HE SAID, WOULD BE PUT TO THE BEST USE TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY. -- MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER IS HAPPY EFFORTS CARRIED OUT BY THE GOVERNMENT HAD BORNE FRUIT, AMONG THEM THE COUNTRY'S SUCCESS IN GOING THROUGH AND THEN RECOVERING FROM THE ECONOMIC RECESSION THAT HAD BADLY HIT IT THE PAST FEW YEARS.

+OUR NATIONAL ECONOMY IS GROWING STRONGER AND THE EFFECTS HAVE BEGUN TO BE FELT BY THE PEOPLE AFTER UNDERGOING A PERIOD OF DEPRESSION FOR SOME TIME DURING WHICH MANY LOST THEIR JOBS AND BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES FOLDED UP,+ HE ADDED.

HE IS CONFIDENT THE UNITY AMONG THE PEOPLE AND THE SINCERITY OF THE LEADERS WOULD RESULT IN A SPEEDING UP OF THE PROCESS OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

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