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U E164 AAE
MAHATHIR-ECONOMY
DM

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(EMBARGO) FOR RELEASE AFTER 10.30PM TODAY (NOV 19)

KUALA LUMPUR, NOV 19 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TONIGHT MALAYSIA NEEDED A STRONG GOVERNMENT SO THAT DEVELOPMENT CAN BE INTENSIFIED.

AS A DEVELOPING COUNTRY, THIS STRENGTH WAS IMPORTANT SO THAT IT COULD CARRY OUT DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS EFFECTIVELY, INCLUDING TAKING ACTIONS WHICH WERE NOT POPULAR.

SPEAKING AT THE MALAYSIAN PRESS NIGHT HERE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID TO RECTIFY THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SITUATION, ANY GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE BRAVE IN TAKING ACTIONS WHICH WERE NOT POPULAR.

→ A WEAK GOVERNMENT WILL ONLY BE WASTING TIME AND ENERGY TO SEEK POPULARITY, → HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA SUCCEEDED IN RECTIFYING ITS ECONOMIC SITUATION BECAUSE IT WAS CAPABLE OF TAKING ACTIONS WHICH WERE NOT POPULAR BUT EFFECTIVE, STRESSING THAT THIS SUCCESS WAS ACKNOWLEDGED BY ALL QUARTERS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR-ECONOMY 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

HE SAID THE ACTIONS INCLUDED REDUCING GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE, REDUCING IMPORTS, ASSISTING EXPORTS AND OPENING UP BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES BY REDUCING RIGID CONDITIONS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THESE GOVERNMENT EFFORTS WERE MADE DIFFICULT BECAUSE THERE WERE GROUPS WHICH DID NOT UNDERSTAND AND THEIR VIEWS SOMETIMES RECEIVED WIDE PUBLICITY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT NOT ONLY MUST ADMINISTER BUT ALSO SHOULD HELP THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY TO STEP UP BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES, INVESTMENTS AND EXPORTS.

CITING TOURISM AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THE INDUSTRY WOULD NOT ONLY HELP BRING IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE BUT ALSO BRING ABOUT GROWTH IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY AND OTHER ANCILLARY INDUSTRIES AND OPEN UP EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. -- MORE

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0231

U E174 AAE
MAHATHIR-ECONOMY 3 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

HE SAID KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICS IN THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE HEIGHTENED, ESPECIALLY ON THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM WHICH WAS PRACTISED.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MANY PEOPLE FELT DEMOCRACY WOULD BRING PROSPERITY IF IT WAS PRACTISED FULLY, ADDING THAT THEY DID NOT REALISE THAT DEMOCRACY TOO COULD BRING DOWN A COUNTRY IF IT WAS NOT PRACTISED RESPONSIBLY AND WITH WISDOM.

HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS LUCKY BECAUSE THERE WAS A NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTY WHICH WAS CAPABLE OF CONTESTING THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND CLEARLY COULD GET A SUFFICIENT MAJORITY TO FORM THE GOVERNMENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A COALITION GOVERNMENT COULD FALL EASILY WHEN ANY ONE OF THE PARTIES WITHIN IT PULLED OUT BECAUSE IT DID NOT HAVE THE SAME IDEOLOGY AND POLICY.

HE SAID THE SAME WOULD HAPPEN TO A TWO PARTY SYSTEM IN WHICH A GOVERNMENT SET UP AFTER A SMALL VICTORY WAS NOT ABLE TO ADMINISTER FIRMLY AND FEARED IT MIGHT FALL. -- BERNAMA

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