

8 0737 AAE
MAHATHIR-OFFER 2'R'2'

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MUAR, DEC 9, (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS DISMISSED TALK THAT HIS OFFER TO TENSKU RAZALEIGH HANJAH AND DATUK MUSA HITAM TO REJOIN THE CABINET WAS MADE DESPITE EXPECTING THE TWO MEN TO REJECT THE OFFER.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE OFFER WAS MADE WITH +UTMOST SINCERITY+ WITH THE HOPE THAT THE TWO FORMER UMNO STRONGMEN WOULD ACCEPT IT SO THAT THEY COULD +SIT AT ONE TABLE+ WITH OTHER PARTY LEADERS TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE MALAYS.

ADDRESSING LOCAL UMNO LEADERS HERE LAST NIGHT, HE CONCEDED HOWEVER THAT THE POSTS OF MINISTERS WITHOUT PORTFOLIO OFFERED TO THE TWO MEN WERE +NOT THAT HIGH+ COMPARED TO THEIR PREVIOUS POSITIONS. TENSKU RAZALEIGH AND DATUK MUSA HITAM WERE EX-FINANCE MINISTER AND EX-DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER RESPECTIVELY.

+WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BECOMING A CABINET MINISTER?, IT MEANS THAT WE CAN ALL SIT DOWN TO DISCUSS AND WORK,+ HE SAID.--MORE
2025HST 09 12 88

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8 0739 AAE
MAHATHIR - OFFER 2 MUAR 2'R'2'

+PEOPLE WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY ENEMIES CAN TOGETHER SIT ROUND THE TABLE FOR THE SAKE OF THE MALAYS AND UMNO.

+IF WE SIT AT A DISTANCE WITH ONE ANOTHER, WE ARE FORCED TO SHOUT IN ORDER TO BE HEARD. WHEN PEOPLE SHOUT, IT IS NO LONGER TALKING AMONG FRIENDS.

+ SO THAT IS WHY WE SHOULD BRIDGE THE DISTANCE AMONG US+, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID BOTH TENSKU RAZALEIGH AND DATUK MUSA HAD RESPONDED TO THE OFFER BY SAYING THAT THEY WERE NOT SEEKING POLITICAL OFFICE.

GOING BY THIS ARGUMENT, THE QUESTION OF THE POSTS BEING COMPARATIVELY LOWER SHOULD NOT ARISE, HE ADDED.

WHILE DENYING SUGGESTIONS THAT HE MADE THE OFFER ALTHOUGH HE FULLY REALISED IT WOULD BE REJECTED, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ASKED + WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY HAD ACCEPTED IT?+.--MORE
2037HST 09 12 88

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8 0741 AAE
MAHATHIR - OFFER 3 MUAR 2'R'2'

+IF THIS HAPPENED, HOW COULD I SAY NO TO THEM. WE WOULD SURELY ACCEPT THEM+.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS TAKING A RISK BY MAKING THE OFFER.

HE SAID ACTUALLY IT WAS MADE WITHOUT OTHER MOTIVES BUT TO UNITE THE MALAYS IN THE WAKE OF STRONG DEMANDS MADE BY CERTAIN GROUPS +FOR THIS AND THAT+.

HE SAID THESE GROUPS WERE BECOMING MORE DARING AND OUTSPOKEN BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED THAT THE MALAYS WERE GETTING WEAKER. HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MADE THE OFFER +FOR THE SAKE OF MALAY UNITY+ AT THE CLOSE OF THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE IN OCTOBER.

BOTH TENSKU RAZALEIGH AND DATUK MUSA REJECTED IT.

TENSKU RAZALEIGH DESCRIBED IT AS +POLITICAL BRIBERY+ WHILE DATUK MUSA SAID MALAY UNITY COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED BY HIM JOINING THE CABINET.--BERNAMA
2047HST 09 12 88