

D201

U ES39 AAE

MAHATHIR

BM

KUCHING, SEPT 22 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMADSAID TODAY HIS WARNING YESTERDAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT HESITATE TO ACT AGAINST ANYONE TRYING TO USURP POWER THROUGH ILLEGAL MEANS IS NOT DIRECTED ONLY AT SARAWAK.

HE SAID THE WARNING, GIVEN DURING HIS OPENING ADDRESS AT THE PARTI PESAKA BUMIPUTERA BERSATU (PBB) SARAWAK GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE, WAS DIRECTED AT ALL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WHICH WERE ALWAYS THINKING OF WAYS TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH ILLEGAL MEANS.

HE MADE THE CLARIFICATION AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE KUCHING INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEFORE LEAVING FOR KUALA LUMPUR AFTER A TWO-DAY VISIT HERE.

ASKED WHETHER THE WARNING, MEANT THAT SARAWAK STILL FACED THE THREAT OF PEOPLE TRYING TO USURP POWER THROUGH ILLEGAL MEANS, HE SAID THE FACT THAT THE STATEMENT WAS MADE IN SARAWAK DID NOT MEAN THAT IT WAS DIRECTED AT THE PEOPLE THERE ONLY BUT AT ALL THE PEOPLE.

SARAWAK HAD FACED SUCH A SITUATION WHEN CERTAIN PARTIES HAD TRIED TO WREST POWER FROM THE SARAWAK GOVERNMENT, RESULTING IN A STATE ELECTION BEING CALLED IN APRIL 1987. -- MORE

1434MST 22 09 89

\* MAHATHIR 2 KUCHING

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT BESIDES SARAWAK, THERE WERE SOME PEOPLE AND GROUPS IN MANY PLACES LIKE SABAH AND KUALA LUMPUR INTERESTED IN ACTING ILLEGALLY TO SEIZE POWER.

HE SAID THAT WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WANTED TO BE FAIR BY NOT TAKING STERN OR UNJUST ACTION, IT DID NOT MEAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT CAPABLE OF ACTING, OR DID NOT HAVE THE COURAGE TO ACT AGAINST THOSE WHO TRIED TO INCITE THE PEOPLE AND ACTED BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF THE LAW TO USURP POWER FOR THEMSELVES.

HE AGAIN TOUCHED ON HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH CHIEF MINISTER TAN SRI HAJI ABDUL TAIB MAHMUD WHICH WAS SAID TO BE STRAINED, SAYING THAT HE DID NOT KNOW HOW ELSE TO SHOW THAT THE RELATIONSHIP WAS A CLOSE ONE.

+EVEN IF I WANT TO SHOW THAT WE DO NOT HAVE PROBLEMS . . . HOW DO I SHOW IT . . . SURELY I DON'T HAVE TO STAY IN SARAWAK FOR A LONG TIME IN TAN SRI TAIB'S HOUSE,+ HE SAID.

+SO IT SUFFICES IN POLITICS THAT WE STATE OUR STAND,+ HE ADDED.

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1443MST 22 09 89

U E550 AAE

MAHATHIR 3 KUCHING

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THERE WAS SUCH SPECULATION, ADDING THAT IT WAS MADE BY FOREIGNERS WHO, FROM THE VERY START, DID NOT WANT TO UNITY ACHIEVED IN THE COUNTRY.

AS SUCH, HE SAID, THEY PURPOSELY SPREAD STORIES WHICH SMEARED THE GOOD NAME OF THE COUNTRY.

+IT WOULD APPEAR THAT I WANT TO SELL LIMBANG TO BRUNEI. I AM AMAZED HOW THIS MATTER CAME ABOUT,+ HE SAID IN REFERENCE TO AN ITEM IN A REGIONAL WEEKLY THAT HE DISCUSSED THE SALE OF THAT PART OF SARAWAK IN TALKS WITH THE SULTAN OF BRUNEI.

HE SAID THE MATTER WAS NOT DISCUSSED IN HIS MEETING WITH THE SULTAN OF BRUNEI.

HE SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO SWEAR BY THE QURAN ON THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IF ASKED TO DO SO BUT THAT WAS NOT THE WAY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM BECAUSE +IF PEOPLE HAVE BAD INTENTION, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO THAT IS CONSIDERED GOOD.+

REPORTING BY THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW ON MATTERS IN MALAYSIA WAS TOTALLY INCORRECT, HE SAID.

IF ITS REPORTING WAS TO BE BELIEVED, HE ADDED, THE COUNTRY WAS RIFE WITH RACIAL CONFLICT AND ACTS OF CORRUPTION AND THERE WAS NO DEVELOPMENT.

BUT ONE COULD SEE THAT MALAYSIA WAS BETTER OFF IN TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT COMPARED WITH SOME COUNTRIES WHICH ALSO HAD INTERNAL PROBLEMS. -- MORE

1547MST 22 09 89

D231

U E552 AAE

MAHATHIR 4 KUCHING (LAST)

REPLYING TO ANOTHER QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS NOT TRUE THAT SARAWAK WAS TREATED AS A STEPCHILD IN TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT, ADDING THAT OTHER STATES LIKE TRENGGANU, KELANTAN AND KEDAH HAD ALSO SAID THEY WERE TREATED IN SIMILAR MANNER BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WHEN DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THESE STATES.

HE ALSO SAID THAT SARAWAK HAD BETTER POTENTIAL THAN THE PENINSULA IN DEVELOPING TOURISM AS A GROWTH INDUSTRY BECAUSE IT HAD MANY INTERESTING FEATURES TO ATTRACT TOURISTS LIKE THE CULTURAL SETTLEMENT IN SANTUBONG.

HE SAID MORE TOURISTS WOULD COME TO SARAWAK AND MORE EASILY TOO IF INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES WERE STEPPED UP LIKE CONSTRUCTION OF AN AIRSTRIP AT THE MULU NATIONAL PARK, AND IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS IN THE STATE.

HE SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD RECEIVED COMPLAINTS THAT THE AIR SERVICES TO SARAWAK BY MALAYSIA AIRLINES (MAS) WERE UNSATISFACTORY.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH MAS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION AND MAS HAD BOUGHT 16 NEW BOEING 737 AIRCRAFT TO STEP UP ITS SERVICES, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SUGGESTED THAT SARAWAK MAKE EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE FOREIGN AIRLINES TO PROVIDE SPECIAL CHARTER SERVICES TO BRING TOURISTS TO THE STATE. -- BERNAMA

1558MST 22 09 89