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MAHATHIR-RIGHTS

BM

MELAKA, A U G 18 (BERNAMA)- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD GAVE AN ASSURANCE TODAY THAT THE MALAYS IN UMNO ARE MODERATE AND HAVE NO INTENTION OF SEIZING THE RIGHTS OF THE OTHER RACES.

UMNO WOULD ENSURE THAT THE RIGHTS OF THE NON-MALAYS WERE NOT ERODED, HE SAID, ADDING THAT THE POSITION OF BOTH THE MALAYS AND THE NON-MALAYS WOULD BE SAFEGUARDED.

OPENING THE KOTA MELAKA UMNO DIVISION DELEGATES MEETING HERE, HE SAID THE MALAYS WERE NOT POWER CRAZY BUT ONLY WANTED THEIR POSITION TO BE SIMILAR TO THE OTHERS IN THE ECONOMIC, EDUCATION AND OTHER FIELDS.

+WHAT WE (THE MALAYS) WANT IS TO BE GIVEN THE RESPECT AS THAT GIVEN TO THE OTHER RACES AND THIS BE DONE WITHOUT TAKING AWAY WHAT IS OWNED BY THE OTHERS, + SAID DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT.

HE SAID THAT THE MALAYS WERE PREPARED TO SHARE POWER AND COOPERATE WITH THE OTHER RACES DUE TO ITS MODERATE STAND SO FAR, EVEN THOUGH UMNO WAS CAPABLE OF FORMING THE GOVERNMENT BY ITSELF.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MODERATE MALAYS HAD SUCCEEDED IN COMING TOGETHER UNDER THE UMNO UMBRELLA UNTIL THEY CAME TO POWER IN THE COUNTRY AND THE NON-MALAYS SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR THE EXISTENCE OF UMNO. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IF UMNO COMPRISED EXTREMISTS WHO WERE INTERESTED IN PROTECTING ONLY THE MALAY RIGHTS WITHOUT GIVING CONSIDERATION TO THE RIGHTS OF THE OTHERS, THEN THE COUNTRY WOULD NOT BE PEACEFUL AND PROGRESSIVE.

HE SAID SOME COUNTRIES RULED BY EXTREMIST GROUPS WERE NOT ONLY UNPROGRESSIVE BUT ALSO BACKWARD BECAUSE THESE GROUPS WERE CARRIED AWAY BY EMOTION AND DID NOT CONSIDER THE RIGHTS OF THE OTHERS.

THE PEACE THAT EXISTED IN MALAYSIA WAS BECAUSE OF UMNO WHICH WAS REPRESENTED BY MODERATE AND FAR-SIGHTED MALAYS WHO WERE NOT INTERESTED IN ROBBING THE RIGHTS OF THE OTHERS, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER THEN REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO APPRECIATE THE PEACE THAT EXISTED NOW AND NOT TAKE IT FOR GRANTED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS NOT EASY TO ADMINISTER A COUNTRY WITH A MULTI-RACIAL POPULATION BECAUSE NEARLY EVERY COUNTRY WITH SUCH A POPULATION WAS NOT PEACEFUL AND DID NOT EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS.

USUALLY, SUCH COUNTRIES FACED MANY PROBLEMS, WITH SOME OF THEM FACED WITH WARS AND PEOPLE LIVING IN FEAR AND EVEN LOSING THEIR LIVES. -- MORE

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THAT WAS WHY THERE WAS NO DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE AND THERE WERE FOOD SHORTAGES IN THESE COUNTRIES AND THE PEOPLE SUFFERED AND LIVED IN FEAR, HE SAID.

BUT, IN MALAYSIA THE MULTI-RACIAL PEOPLE LIVED PEACEFULLY EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE DIFFERING VIEWS BUT NOT TO THE EXTENT WHERE THE PEOPLE HAD TO LIVE IN FEAR, HE SAID.

EARLIER, THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS WIFE, DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH ALI, WERE GIVEN A WARM WELCOME ON ARRIVAL AT THE BATU BERENDAM AIRPORT.

THEY WERE GREETED ON ARRIVAL BY CHIEF MINISTER DATUK SERI ABDUL RAHIM TAMBAYCHIK AND SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS. -- BERNAMA

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