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MEETING-MAHATHIR R' R' R'

BM

KUALA LUMPUR, DEC 12 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI MAHATHIR MOHAMAD WHO HELD TALKS WITH SEMANGAT 46 PRESIDENT TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH TODAY SAID THE PROBLEM OF MALAY UNITY CAN BE RESOLVED PRIOR TO OR AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION.

HE SAID SUCH A PROBLEM EXISTED DURING THE TIME OF UMNO FOUNDER DATUK ONN JAAFAR WHEN HE PROPOSED THAT THE PARTY BE OPENED TO THE OTHER RACES.

THE PROPOSAL DID NOT RECEIVE SUPPORT AND THE PROBLEM OF MALAY UNITY ENDED IN THE GENERAL ELECTION WHEN PART1 NEGARA LED BY DATUK ONN, WHO LEFT UMNO, FAILED TO GET THE BACKING OF THE PEOPLE,

THE PRIME MINISTER DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER A SIMILAR SITUATION WOULD ARISE BUT SAID THAT THE EXISTING PROBLEM OF MALAY UNITY MIGHT BE SETTLED BY THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IN POLITICS, SUCH A SCENARIO WAS NORMAL AND ONE SHOULD EXPECT SUCH THINGS AND BE PREPARED TO FACE THEM.

HE WAS SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER THE 45-MINUTE TALKS WITH TENGKU RAZALEIGH AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE,

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MEETING-MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR 4'9'8'

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS USEFUL IN EFFORTS TO EXPAND MALAY UNITY.

HE SAID THERE WAS ALREADY MALAY UNITY IN THE COUNTRY, WITH MAJORITY OF THE MALAYS UNDER UMNO BUT +WE WANT TO EXPAND IT TO OTHERS AS WELL.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE MEETING WAS USEFUL ALSO BECAUSE HE COULD DIRECTLY MEET TENGKU RAZALEIGH AND GET TO KNOW HIS STAND ON MALAY UNITY.

HE SAID PRIOR TO THE MEETING, BOTH OF THEM KNEW EACH OTHER'S STAND THROUGH THE PRESS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO HOLD ANOTHER MEETING IF IT WAS PROPOSED BY TENGKU RAZALEIGH. -- MORE

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MEETING-MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR R' R' R'

HE SAID HE TOLD TENGKU RAZALEIGH THAT UMNO WAS OPENED TO ALL MALAYS AND ANYONE COULD JOIN SO LONG AS THEY ADHERED TO THE PARTY'S CONSTITUTION AND PROCEDURES.

+THEY CAN JOIN UMNO AND CAN SEEK POSITIONS IN THE PARTY THROUGH THE PROCESS OF ELECTION,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, IF TENGKU RAZALEIGH AND HIS FOLLOWERS JOINED UMNO, THEY COULD NOT IMMEDIATELY BE GIVEN POSTS BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN FILLED BY OTHERS.

+WE CANNOT ASK ALL THE THREE VICE-PRESIDENTS TO RESIGN SO THAT THEIR POSTS CAN BE GIVEN TO THEM. BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT IF A PERSON IS POPULAR, HE COULD WIN IN THE ELECTION,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PRESENT UMNO WAS SIMILAR TO THAT BEFORE IT WAS DECLARED UNLAWFUL BY THE COURT IN TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP, SPIRIT AND STRUGGLE.

HE SAID THERE WERE DIFFERENCES IN VIEWS BETWEEN HIM AND TENGKU RAZALEIGH ON THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN CHANGING THE DECISION OF THE COURT, TO REVIVE UMNO WHICH WAS DECLARED UNLAWFUL. -- MORE

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MEETING-MAHATHIR 4 KUALA LUMPUR R' R' R'

ACCORDING TO DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, TENGGU RAZALEIGH SAID PARLIAMENT COULD USE ITS POWERS TO REVIVE THE OLD UMNO AND REVERSE THE COURT DECISION MAKING THE PARTY UNLAWFUL LAST YEAR.

+I FEEL PARLIAMENT IS NOT ENTITLED TO OVERULE A COURT DECISION AND WE SHOULD ADHERE TO THE DECISION WHICH HAS BEEN MADE,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A LAW COULD BE AMENDED BEFORE THE COURT MADE A DECISION PERTAINING TO IT AND THAT WHEN A COURT HAD ALREADY MADE A DECISION,+WE CANNOT DO THE REVERSE.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR FELT IF PARLIAMENT COULD CHANGE A COURT DECISION9 IT WOULD BE THE LAST COURT OF APPEAL AND IN THIS CASE, IT INVOLVED A PARTY IN THE GOVERNMENT.

+IF THE GOVERNMENT USES ITS MAJORITY TO FAVOUR ITSELF, THEN I THINK WE ARE NOT ACTING WITH FAIRNESS AND WHAT WILL -HAPPEN IF THE DECISION OF THE COURT FAVOURS THE OPPOSITION PARTY AND WE CAN GO TO PARLIAMENT TO CHANGE THE DECISION,+ HE ASKED. -- MORE
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MEETING-MAHATHIR 5 KUALA LUMPUR R' R' R'

+THIS IS NOT FAIR AND WE WILL BE BIASED AGAINST THE OPPOSITION AND THEREFORE9 WE CANNOT USE PARLIAMENT FOR THE PURPOSE,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REFERRED TO THE CASE INVOLVING PETRONAS WHEN IT TOOK A CONTROLLING STAKE IN BANK BUMIPUTRA MALAYSIA BERHAD (BBMB) WHICH FACED PROBLEMS NOT LONG AGO. IT WAS LATER DISCOVERED THAT THE ARTICLE PERTAINING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PETRONAS DID NOT ALLOW IT TO BE INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES OTHER THAN IN THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

+WE MADE A PROVISION FOR THIS PURPOSE BEFORE THE COURT MADE A DECISION AND IF THE COURT HAD ALREADY MADE THE DECISION, WE HAVE NO POWER TO CHANGE IT,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO SAID THAT MATTERS DISCUSSED WITH TENGGU RAZALEIGH WOULD BE BROUGHT UP AT THE NEXT UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING. -- BERNAMA
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