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MAHATHIR-PREDICTION
BY ABDUL RAHMAN SULAIMAN
(EMBARGO: FOR USE AFTER 6 P.M. TODAY, DEC 28)

KUALA LUMPUR, DEC 28 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS PREDICTED ANOTHER UPHEAVAL IN THE EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES IN THE FUTURE FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM WORLDWIDE.

THE TENDENCY THEN, HE SAID, WOULD BE TO GO BACK TO THE AUTHORITARIAN RULE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THIS WHEN ASKED FOR HIS COMMENT DURING HIS YEAR-END INTERVIEW WITH SENIOR EDITORS ON THE GENERAL PERCEPTION THAT DEMOCRACY SEEMS TO BE THE +IN THING+ TODAY NOW THAT SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM HAVE ALREADY PROVED TO BE A FAILURE.

HE SAID: +IN THE FIRST PLACE THE EXPECTATION THAT BECAUSE A COUNTRY IS DEMOCRATIC THEREFORE IT IS GOING TO PROSPER IS NAIVE. IT'S NOT AS EASY TO MANAGE A DEMOCRACY; IT'S PERHAPS EASIER TO MANAGE AN AUTOCRACY. THERE WILL BE SO MUCH POLITICAL DISRUPTION THAT IT IS NOT EASY TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC GROWTH.+

QUOTING THE SOVIET UNION AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID FOR 70 YEARS THE COUNTRY HAD NO EXPERIENCE IN PRIVATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP; NEITHER HAD IT PRIVATE MANAGERS.

AS A RESULT, THE POPE'S CAPACITY TO MANAGE IN A FREE MARKET SYSTEM WAS EXTREMELY LIMITED BECAUSE THEY HAD NO EXPERIENCE. --MORE

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+THEREFORE WHILE THERE MAY BE POLITICAL FREEDOM, THE ECONOMY MAY JUST FAIL TO BRING WHAT THE PEOPLE ARE EXPECTING AND THAT MAY CAUSE SOME UPHEAVAL UNLESS OF COURSE THE WEST TAKES A MUCH MORE POSITIVE VIEW.+

+ AT THE MOMENT THE WEST TENDS TO GLOAT OVER THEIR VICTORY AND THEY ARE SO HAPPY THAT NOT ONLY THAT THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM HAS FAILED, THEY ARE HAPPY TO SEE ALL THESE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES GOING THROUGH A VERY CRITICAL PERIOD, +HE SAID.

SAYING THAT THIS WAS A WRONG ATTITUDE, HE SAID WHAT THE WEST SHOULD DO WAS TO TRY AND HELP AND BE SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS THESE COUNTRIES WHICH WOULD TAKE TIME TO RECOVER.

+IT WILL TAKE THEM 20 OR 30 YEARS BEFORE THEY CAN RESTORE A FREE MARKET SYSTEM IN WHICH THEY NEED ENTREPRENEURS, MANAGERS AND ALL KINDS OF SKILLS WHICH A FREE MARKET SYSTEM NEEDS IN ORDER TO PROSPER. WE ARE GOING TO SEE A PERIOD OF UPHEAVALS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID WHILE IT WAS FINE TO SAY THAT PEOPLE'S POWER HAD RESTORED DEMOCRACY, PEOPLE WERE NOT SINGLE-MINDED BUT HAD DIFFERENT VIEWS ON HOW THINGS SHOULD BE DONE AND WERE GOING TO BE DIVIDED ONCE THEY HAD OVERTHROWN THE COMMUNIST REGIME.

+THEN THEY ARE GOING TO BE DIVIDED AMONG THEMSELVES..THEY ARE GOING TO FIGHT AMONG EACH OTHER AND IF THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE A STABLE GOVERNMENT, THEN THERE IS AN EXCUSE EITHER FOR THE MILITARY OR THE DIE-HARD COMMUNISTS TO MAKE A COMEBACK. THEY WILL GUARANTEE STABILITY...OF COURSE AT A PRICE... AND SINCE THE OTHERS ARE NOT CAPABLE OF LOOKING AFTER SECURITY THESE PEOPLE MIGHT JUST BE ABLE TO SEIZE POWER BY FORCE.+ -- MORE

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ON WHETHER ISLAM WOULD THEN BE THE ONLY OPTION LEFT FOR THE WORLD, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT DEPENDED VERY MUCH ON THE MUSLIMS THEMSELVES.

+UNFORTUNATELY AT THE MOMENT MUSLIM COUNTRIES DO NOT SEEM TO BE VERY GOOD EXAMPLES. IT'S ONE THING TO SAY THAT ISLAM IS GOOD, IT'S ANOTHER THING TO SAY THAT PEOPLE OF ISLAMIC FAITH ARE GOOD, + HE SAID.

+THEY HAVE SHOWN THAT THEY ARE QUARRELSOME, INTOLERANT, THEY FIGHT AGAINST EACH OTHER, THEY MISINTERPRET THEIR OWN RELIGION AND GENERALLY SPEAKING, THEY ARE NOT GOOD PRACTITIONERS OF ISLAM AND THEREFORE THEY ARE NOT GOOD EXAMPLES. AND IF THEY ARE NOT GOOD EXAMPLES, HOW ARE THEY GOING TO BE A MODEL ON HOW A COUNTRY SHOULD BE RUN PROSPEROUSLY. LET US NOT KID OURSELVES. WE WOULD LIKE THAT BUT MOST MUSLIMS DON'T PRACTISE WHAT THEY PREACH, + HE ADDED. --

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