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MAHATHIR-NEP

(EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AFTER 6 P.M. TODAY, DEC 28)

KUALA LUMPUR, DEC 28 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE MORE STRICT IN SUPERVISING BUMIPUTERAS TO GET THEM TO CHANGE WHAT HE DESCRIBES AS THEIR +DISAPPOINTING ATTITUDES.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE EMPHASIS NOW WOULD BE ON TURNING OUT GOOD BUMIPUTERA MANAGERS -- THE SORT WHO COULD SUCCEED ON THEIR OWN WITHOUT HAVING TO DEPEND ON GOVERNMENT +CRUTCHES+.

IN A YEAR-END INTERVIEW WITH SENIOR EDITORS OF THE LOCAL MEDIA, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SPOKE OF A DIFFERENT CONCEPT OF +ALI BABA+ BUSINESS UNDER WHICH +ALI+ WOULD BE A WORKING AND NOT A SLEEPING PARTNER.

THE PRIME MINISTER, DEALING AT LENGTH WITH THE SUCCESSES AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP), SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH THE ATTITUDES OF BUMIPUTERAS WHO SAW THE NEP NOT AS A MEANS OF ACQUIRING SKILLS BUT AS A WAY OF GETTING RICH QUICK.

HE SAID THESE PEOPLE WERE QUITE WILLING TO SELL THEIR RIGHTS UNDER THE NEP TO GET IMMEDIATE GAINS.

+SELLING THEIR NAMES, LICENCES... THEY THINK THIS IS WHAT THE NEP WANTS THEM TO DO,+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT THEY WERE ALSO NON-BUMIPUTERAS WHO WERE ONLY TOO WILLING TO JUST PAY OFF THE BUMIPUTERAS SO THAT THEY DID NOT GET INVOLVED IN THE ACTUAL WORK. -- MORE

MAHATHIR-NEP 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT BY GIVING AWAY THE MANAGEMENT AND GETTING SOME MONEY FOR TURNING OVER LICENCES, THE BUMIPUTERAS DEPRIVED THEMSELVES OF THE OPPORTUNITY OF LEARNING HOW TO MANAGE AND ACQUIRING GOOD WORK ETHICS.

AS A RESULT, THEY COULD NOT SUCCEED IF LEFT ON THEIR OWN. HOWEVER, HE ADMITTED THAT THE BLAME SHOULD ALSO GO TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR BEING TOLERANT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE STRESS NOW SHOULD BE ON TURNING OUT GOOD BUMIPUTERA MANAGERS -- PEOPLE WHO WERE ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN THE WORK.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGED JOINT VENTURES BETWEEN BUMIPUTERAS AND NON-BUMIPUTERAS, THE SO-CALLED ALI-BABA BUSINESS.

+BUT WE WANT ALI TO WORK AND IF THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ALI WORKING, THEN WE WILL GIVE THE LICENCE TO THE BABA.

+IF HE (ALI) WANTS THE LICENCE FOR HIMSELF, HE MUST WORK AND SHOW EVIDENCE OF WORKING ... HE MUST NEGOTIATE, HE MUST PUT UP CAPITAL, AND IF HE HAS NO CAPITAL, THEN HE SHOULD PUT UP THE CAPITAL FROM WHATEVER PROFIT HE MAKES,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

+ALI+ MUST ALSO BE PREPARED NOT TO MAKE MONEY INITIALLY AND TO SUFFER FIRST. -- MORE

MAHATHIR-NEP 3 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

+WE ARE SLOWLY COMING AROUND TO THIS AND THIS IS WHY WE HAVE STARTED UNIVERSITIES THAT ARE CONCERNED EXCLUSIVELY WITH MANAGEMENT,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HE SAID THAT BUMIPUTERAS, HAVING NO MANAGEMENT SKILLS, SHOULD HAVE LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE BUT SINCE THEY HAD NOT, THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE TAUGHT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO TAKE UNPOPULAR MEASURES TO FULFIL ITS REponsIBILITY.

+FOR HOW LONG WILL WE BE NEEDED TO SUPPORT THEM (BUMIPUTERAS) THE WAY WE ARE SUPPORTING THEM NOW?+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE COUNTRY'S GROWTH RATE, THE NEP HAD DONE EXTREMELY WELL.

THE RATE OF GROWTH FOR BUMIPUTERAS, FROM ONE PERCENT TO 19 OR 20 PERCENT IN 20 YEARS, REPRESENTED A RATE OF 2000 PERCENT OVER A PERIOD OF 20 YEARS OR 100 PERCENT A YEAR.

+IN THAT SENSE IT IS A SUCCESS,+ HE SAID.

+(BUT) THERE ARE OTHER ASPECTS OF THE NEP WHICH, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT TOO CONTROVERSIAL, WE NEVER TALK ABOUT.

+FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE POVERTY AND THAT IS ALSO A GREAT SUCCESS.+ -- BERNAMA

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