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PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR
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KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 14, (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE DAP IS CONTINUALLY QUESTIONING THE INDEPENDENT ROLE OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION BECAUSE IT WANTS TO MAKE IT EASIER TO CHARGE THAT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION IS ILLEGAL, IF IT LOSES.

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED DURING THE DEBATE ON THE CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL AT THE DEWAN RAKYAT, HE SAID THE DAP PLOY WAS TO CAST DOUBT BEFORE THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION WAS HELD.

HE STRESSED THAT THE ELECTION COMMISSION HAD FROM THE BEGINNING BEEN AN INDEPENDENT BODY AND HAD NEVER DEVIATED.

IF IT WAS NOT INDEPENDENT, HOW COULD THE OPPOSITION WIN MANY SEATS AGAINST THE GERAKAN AND MCA CANDIDATES IN THE 1986 GENERAL ELECTION, HE ASKED.

THE PRIME MINISTER DENIED A DAP CHARGE THAT UMNO DIRECTED THE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A VOTERS REGISTRATION EXERCISE SPECIALLY TO REGISTER ABOUT 300,000 UMNO MEMBERS. -- MORE
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OPPOSITION LEADER ENCIK LIM KIT SIANG BACKED THE CHARGE BY PRODUCING A CIRCULAR FROM THE KELANTAN UMNO LIAISON COMMITTEE SECRETARY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE CIRCULAR COULD HAVE BEEN FABRICATED BY IRRESPONSIBLE PEOPLE AND THE DAP POUNCED ON THIS TO DISCREDIT THE COMMISSION.

ENCIK LIM THEN ASKED OF ANOTHER CIRCULAR BY UMNO SECRETARY-GENERAL DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT DATED SEPT 15 ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION AND VOTERS' REGISTRATION REFERRING TO A DECISION BY THE PARTY SUPREME COUNCIL A DAY EARLIER.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE PARTY SUPREME COUNCIL NEVER MADE SUCH A DECISION, ADDING THAT DATUK MOHAMED MIGHT HAVE MADE A MISTAKE.

ON MPS RESIGNING TO TEST THEIR POPULARITY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR CITED AS AN EXAMPLE DATUK SHAHRIR SAMAD (BN-JOHOR BAHRU) WHO RESIGNED HIS SEAT TO TEST HIS POPULARITY IN AUGUST 1988.

BUT AFTER WINNING THE BY-ELECTION, HE DID NOT MEET THE VOTERS TO FIND OUT WHETHER HE SHOULD JOIN UMNO, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID. --
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