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R E972 AAE
MAHATHIR-OBSERVERS
BM

ALOR SETAR, JULY 2, (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT THE ELECTION WATCH TO HELP OBSERVE THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION BECAUSE THE ACTIONS OF THE PANEL MEMBERS SHOWED THEY ARE +ONE-SIDED+.

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL HAD GONE ROUND THE COUNTRY DISCREDITING THE GOVERNMENT, HE TOLD REPORTERS AT A HARI RAYA AIDIL ADHA OPEN HOUSE IN TITI GAJAH NEAR HERE.

THEY CANNOT BE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE OBSERVERS FROM COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES BECAUSE THEY WOULD ONLY CONFUSE THE ISSUE, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS REPLYING TO THE REPORTERS WHO ASKED HIM TO COMMENT ON A STATEMENT BY SEMANGAT 46 PRESIDENT, TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH, YESTERDAY THAT THE ELECTION WATCH BE ALLOWED TO ASSIST THE OBSERVERS FROM COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES.

THE ELECTION WATCH IS HEADED BY FORMER LORD PRESIDENT TUN SUFFIAN HASHIM. -- MORE
1644MST 02 07 90

R E973 AAE
MAHATHIR-OBSERVERS 2 ALOR SETAR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REITERATED THAT THE ELECTION OBSERVERS WOULD BE SELECTED BY THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL TO ENSURE THAT THEY WERE INDEPENDENT AND DID NOT FAVOUR ANY SIDE IN THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR DUTY.

HE SAID HE WOULD WRITE TO THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT ONCE HE HAD LEARNED OF THE REACTION IN THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING THE VIEWS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, TO HAVING THE OBSERVERS.

THE COST OF BRINGING THE OBSERVERS WOULD BE BORNE BY THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID.

THE OBSERVERS WILL, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ENSURE THAT THE GENERAL ELECTION IS CONDUCTED SMOOTHLY AND FAIRLY AND WITHOUT FAVOURING ANY SIDE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THEY COULD OBSERVE THE ELECTION PROCESS CLOSELY BECAUSE MALAYSIA WAS UNLIKE SOME COUNTRIES WHICH USED MILITARY TO FORCE THE PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR THE GOVERNMENT. -- MORE
1650MST 02 07 90

R E974 AAE
MAHATHIR-OBSERVERS 3 ALOR SETAR

ASKED ABOUT THE PROBLEM IN THE MCA, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO BARISAN NASIONAL CHAIRMAN, SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO INTERFERE AS HE CONSIDERED IT A DOMESTIC MATTER OF THE PARTY.

HE ADDED: +I DO WANT TO GIVE ANY ADVICE BECAUSE PEOPLE WILL THEN ASSUME THAT I AM INTERFERING.

+I AM NOT SUPPORTING ANY SIDE. THE MCA LEADERS CAN DO ANYTHING THEY LIKE SO LONG AS THEIR ACTIONS ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES WE PRACTICE.+

HE SAID THE LOSER MUST ACCEPT THE DECISION AND GIVE HIS SUPPORT TO THE VICTOR, UNLIKE WHAT HAPPENED IN UMNO.

MORE THAN 2,000 PEOPLE, INCLUDING MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI HAJI OSMAN AROFF, CALLED ON THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS WIFE TO WISH THEM +SELAMAT HARI RAYA+. -- BERNAMA
1652MST 02 07 90