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ANWAR-ECONOMY
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KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 14 (BERNAMA) -- EDUCATION MINISTER ENCIK ANWAR IBRAHIM TODAY DISMISSED CLAIMS THAT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD'S LEADERSHIP WAS THE CAUSE OF THE ECONOMIC RECESSION DURING THE 1986-87 PERIOD.

+WHILE SUCH CLAIMS ARE BASESLESS, THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH UP TO NOW IS VERY ENCOURAGING AND PROVES THAT HIS LEADERSHIP CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ECONOMIC SITUATION AT THAT TIME,+ HE SAID.

ENCIK ANWAR SAID THAT WHILE FACING THE RECESSION, THE COUNTRY ALSO EXPERIENCED A TENSE POLITICAL SITUATION AT THAT TIME.

+AT THAT TIME, THE GOVERNMENT AND UMNO LEADERSHIP WAS NEARLY ON THE DEFENSIVE BECAUSE ALL THOSE WHO LEVELLED CRITICISM AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT FELT THAT THE FAULT WAS ON THE POLICIES AND STYLE OF LEADERSHIP OF DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS HERE AFTER OPENING THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FEDERAL TERRITORY BRANCH OF THE MALAYSIAN MALAY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.

+THERE WERE ALSO SOME WHO SAID THAT IF THE ECONOMY WAS TO PROGRESS, THE LEADERSHIP SHOULD BE CHANGED AND THIS VIEW WAS SUPPORTED BY A SMALL GROUP OF BUSINESSMEN. -- MORE
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+THEY SAID THAT IF THE LEADERSHIP REMAINED, THE COUNTRY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ENHANCE ITS ECONOMIC POSITION,+ HE SAID.

ENCIK ANWAR SAID THOSE WHO HELD TO THIS VIEW ALSO AGREED THAT THE EXPERTISE OF +ONE OR TWO LEADERS+ IN ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT COULD NOT BE REPLACED.

+THIS OPINION COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BECAUSE THE ONE OR TWO LEADERS MENTIONED WERE INVOLVED IN MANY ECONOMIC BLUNDERS AND FAILED IN MANY UNDERTAKINGS DUE TO THEIR SPENDTHRIFT AND NEGLIGENT ATTITUDE,+ HE SAID.

THEY ALSO MADE USE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC STRENGTH FOR THEIR OWN POLITICAL ENDS, HE SAID.

+THIS IS NOT EFFICIENT ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT BUT A POPULAR POLITICAL STYLE WHICH CAN EARN THE ATTENTION OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO DO NOT THINK OF THE LONG TERM. IT CANNOT CONVINCE SERIOUS BUSINESSMEN AND ECONOMISTS,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
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THE MINISTER SAID THESE LEADERS ALSO PROMOTED THE METEORIC RISE OF SEVERAL NON-BUMIPUTERA BUSINESSMEN BY HELPING THEM BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR VENTURES THROUGH +EXTRAORDINARY+ SUPPORT.

EARLIER, WHEN SPEAKING AT THE FUNCTION, ENCIK ANWAR SAID IT SHOULD BE ENSURED THAT THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) HELPED BUMIPUTERA BUSINESSMEN AND NOT RETARD THEIR BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.

HE SAID THAT SO FAR, THE NEP HAD NOT PRODUCED VERY SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMEN AND EFFORTS TO HELP BUMIPUTERA ENTREPRENEURS SHOULD BE STEPPED UP.

ENCIK ANWAR SAID THAT SMALL ENTREPRENEURS WERE CONCERNED OVER THE GOVERNMENT'S LIBERAL ECONOMIC POLICY BECAUSE IT FAVOURED THOSE WHO WERE ALREADY ESTABLISHED.

BRANCH CHAIRMAN ENCIK MOEHAMAD IZAT EMIR SAID SOME GROUPS WANTED THE NEP TO BE ABOLISHED BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WANT TO SEE BUMIPUTERAS IN THE BUSINESS WORLD. -- MORE

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HE SAID THAT THE POLICY DID NOT ROB ANYONE'S RIGHT BUT PROTECTED BUMIPUTERA INTEREST SO THAT THEY COULD JOIN THE OTHERS IN BUSINESS AND HELP IN NATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH.

ALSO PRESENT WERE MALAYSIAN MALAY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY PRESIDENT SENATOR DR NAWAWI MAT AWIN AND SECRETARY-GENERAL SENATOR DATUK ABU BAKAR LAJIM. -- BERNAMA

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