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U E929 AAE  
MAHATHIR-WORKERS  
BM

KOTA BAHARU, SEPT 28<sup>ac</sup> (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMD TODAY REMINDED WORKERS OF THE RISKS THEY FACE IF THE LABOUR UNIONS DID NOT ACT PROPERLY IN DEFENDING THEIR RIGHTS.

ADOPTING A CONFRONTATIONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EMPLOYERS OR GOVERNMENT MERELY TO PROVE THE STRENGTH OF THE UNION LEADERSHIP WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO EVERYONE'S INTEREST, HE SAID.

+A UNION CAN BE CONSIDERED AS A BODY TO CHECK AGAINST POSSIBLE SUPPRESSION OF WORKERS, AND ANY MEASURE TAKEN TO PREVENT THIS CAN BE DONE THROUGH DISCUSSION,+ HE TOLD GROUPS C AND D MUSLIM GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AT A MEETING AT THE BALAI ISLAM HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ANY CLAIMS BY THE WORKERS SHOULD BE MADE THROUGH DISCUSSION TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS, AND NOT BY THREATENING TO STRIKE OR TAKING OTHER ACTION.

STRESSING THE NEED FOR MODERATION IN WHATEVER THEY DID, HE CITED THE MALAY ADAGE +KALAU MENARIK BENANG DALAM TEPUNG... BIARLAH BENANG ITU TAK PUTUS DAN TEPUNG PULA TAK BERKECAI+ (IF WE DRAW THREAD THROUGH DOUGH... DON'T SNAP THE THREAD AND CRUMBLE THE DOUGH.+ --  
MORE

1559MST 28 09 90

MAHATHIR-WORKERS 2 KOTA BAHARU

IN THIS CONNECTION, HE ADVISED WORKERS NOT TO BE EASILY INFLUENCED BY CERTAIN UNION LEADERS WHO WERE USING WORKERS TO FURTHER THEIR OWN POLITICAL AMBITIONS.

THESE LEADERS, SUPPOSEDLY POPULAR FOR THEIR AGGRESSIVE MANNER IN PURSUING WORKERS' RIGHTS, DID NOT THINK OF THE EFFECTS THEIR CLAIMS WOULD HAVE ON THE NATIONAL ECONOMY AND POLITICAL STABILITY, HE SAID.

+SUCH LEADERS ARE USUALLY THOSE WHO DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCEED IN POLITICS AND THEY USE THE UNION AS A PLATFORM TO BECOME MORE POPULAR,+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID WORKERS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION WHEN ASKING FOR HIGHER SALARIES AND THE LIKE.

HE GAVE AN ASSURANCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MEET WORKERS' CLAIMS ACCORDING TO ITS CAPABILITY AND HE REMINDED THEM NOT TO BE QUICK TO RESORTING TO THREATS OF STRIKE ACTION TO CHALLENGE THE GOVERNMENT.

+WE CAN SEE FOR OURSELVES THE EFFECTS OF STRIKES ON A DEVELOPED COUNTRY LIKE BRITAIN AND THE ECONOMIES OF SEVERAL COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE BOWED TO UNREASONABLE PAY CLAIMS,+ HE SAID. -- MORE  
1604MST 28 09 90

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MAHATHIR-WORKERS 3 KOTA BAHARU

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT WOULD BE POINTLESS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MEET CLAIMS FOR A PAY RISE IF THIS COULD LEAD TO INFLATION, INCREASE THE COUNTRY'S DEBTS AND LOWER THE PEOPLE'S PURCHASING POWER.

THE COUNTRY HAD MANAGED ITS FINANCES WELL AND MAINTAINED THE INFLATION RATE AT TWO PER CENT PER ANNUM, UNLIKE COUNTRIES LIKE ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL WHOSE INFLATION HAD SOARED TO 20,000 PER CENT A YEAR.

HE SAID MALAYSIA DID NOT WANT TO BECOME BANKRUPT AND IT WOULD NOT BE LIKE BRAZIL, MEXICO AND NIGERIA WHICH HAD TO BORROW FROM EVERYWHERE TO MEET THEIR EXPENDITURES.

+INSTEAD, WE HAVE BEEN LABELLED A MODEL COUNTRY BY THE WORLD BANK BECAUSE OF ORDERLY REPAYMENT OF OUR DEBTS,+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO REMINDED WORKERS OF THE NEED TO ALWAYS MAINTAIN POLITICAL STABILITY. -- MORE  
1615MST 28 09 90

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U E951 AAE

MAHATHIR-WORKERS 4 KOTA BAHARU

+IN A DEMOCRACY IT IS OUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE LEADERS WHO CAN SERVE BUT WE SHOULD NOT BE DOING THIS LIKE CHANGING CLOTHES,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS A FACT THAT LETTING A LEADER RULE FOR TOO LONG WITH UNRESTRICTED POWERS COULD BRING BAD CONSEQUENCES.

THIS WAS EVIDENT IN THE REIGN OF HITLER, WHO AT FIRST DEVELOPED THE COUNTRY AND THEN LED IT TO DESTRUCTION, AND THE UNDEMOCRATIC ACTIONS OF IRAQI PRESIDENT SADDAM HUSSEIN WHICH SPARKED OFF THE GULF CRISIS, HE ADDED.

AS SUCH, WORKERS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN ITS TRUE SENSE AND NOT ACT IN ANYWAY THAT COULD NEGATE THEIR OWN RIGHTS, HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE SYSTEM OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY BEING PRACTISED IN THE COUNTRY HAD SERVED IT WELL AND SHOULD BE PRESERVED. -- MORE

D810

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MAHATHIR-WORKERS 5 KUALA LUMPUR

NO ONE WANTED TO BE LED BY A GROUP WHICH COULD NOT MANAGE THE COUNTRY'S FINANCES PROPERLY OR WHICH COULD COMPROMISE ITS INTEGRITY BY DENYING THE PEOPLE THEIR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR CITED AN EXAMPLE OF HOW KEDAH SUFFERED SUCH A FATE IN 1911, WHEN IT WAS HANDED OVER TO THE ENGLISH ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATORS BECAUSE OF DEBTS THAT COULD NOT BE REPAYED TO SIAM.

THE PEOPLE THEN, WHO WERE NOT ASKED FOR THEIR VIEWS, HAD TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF A \$5 MILLION LOAN TAKEN TO FINANCE THE WEDDINGS OF FIVE ROYAL FAMILY MEMBERS, HE SAID.

THIS COULD RECUR IF THE PEOPLE DID NOT USE THEIR RIGHTS AND LEADERS FAILED TO PROTECT THE MONEY ENTRUSTED TO THEM, HE SAID. --

BERNAMA

1714MST 28 09 90