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MAHATHIR-MANDELA

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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 6 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT WILL TRY TO ARRANGE FOR THE VISIT TO MALAYSIA OF SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONALIST LEADER NELSON MANDELA TO TAKE PLACE AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

ENCIK MANDELA IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE HERE ON OCT 19 DURING A MONTH-LONG EIGHT-NATION TOUR THAT WILL TAKE HIM ACROSS THE GLOBE, FROM PARIS TO TOKYO.

POLLING FOR MALAYSIA'S EIGHTH GENERAL ELECTION IS SET FOR OCT 21.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ENCIK MANDELA COULD PROBABLY VISIT BRUNEI DARUSSALAM BEFORE COMING TO MALAYSIA. ENCIK MANDELA IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT THE 'SULTANATE ON OCT 21.

+IF HIS SCHEDULE CANNOT BE CHANGED, IT'S OKAY BUT IF HE CAN, OF COURSE WE WOULD LIKE HIM TO COME AFTER THE ELECTION,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING AN UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING AT MENARA DATUK ONN, PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE, HERE.

+AND AFTER THE ELECTION, OF COURSE, SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT THEY WILL BE THE HOSTS ... I DON'T KNOW,+ HE QUIPPED. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR+MANDELA 2 KUALA LUMPUR

ENCIK MANDELA WILL BEGIN HIS TOUR BY GOING TO FRANCE ON MONDAY. HE IS ALSO SCHEDULED TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION (OCT 9), INDIA (OCT 14), MALAYSIA (OCT 19), BRUNEI DARUSSALAM (OCT 21), AUSTRALIA (OCT 22), INDONESIA (OCT 26) AND JAPAN (OCT 27) BEFORE RETURNING TO JOHANNESBURG (NOV 2).

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR LET OUT A SMILE WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE DAP'S CLAIM THAT ENCIK MANDELA'S VISIT HERE WAS A +VOTE-GETTING GIMMICK+ OF THE BARISAN NASIONAL.

+I WISH I'M ALL THAT POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL THAT I CAN DIRECT NELSON MANDELA TO COME AND CAMPAIGN FOR ME,+ HE SAID.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ENCIK GHAFAR BABA, SEATED TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S RIGHT, CHIPPED IN: +THE OPPOSITION CAN INVITE (US PRESIDENT GEORGE) BUSH TO COME.+

DAP SECRETARY-GENERAL LIM KIT SIANG, IN A STATEMENT TODAY, CLAIMED THAT THE BARISAN NASIONAL DICTATED THE SETTING OF POLLING DAY FOR OCT 21 BECAUSE IT WANTED TO TURN ENCIK MANDELA'S VISIT ON OCT 19 INTO A VOTE-GETTING GIMMICK. -- BERNAMA
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