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MAHATHIR-OBSERVER  
BM

KUCHING, OCT 13 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION TO THE COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER GROUP TO SEE THE CONDUCT OF THE 1990 GENERAL ELECTION IS TO PROVE THAT THE EXERCISE IS DONE FREELY AND FAIRLY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT THE ELECTION COMMISSION WAS DISPLEASED WITH THE GROUP'S PRESENCE AS THIS INDIRECTLY IMPLIED THAT THE COMMISSION LACKED CREDIBILITY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE APPRECIATED THE COMMISSION'S FEELINGS BUT THE INVITATION TO THE GROUP WAS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED.

THE ELECTION COMMISSION HAD IN FACT INDEPENDENTLY HANDLED SEVEN GENERAL ELECTIONS EFFICIENTLY AND NO ONE HAD COMPLAINED AGAINST IT.

THOSE DISSATISFIED WITH ITS HANDLING OF A GENERAL ELECTION COULD PETITION AGAINST THE COMMISSION IN COURT, SAID THE PRIME MINISTER AT A PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE LEAVING FOR SABAH AT THE END OF HIS ONE-DAY VISIT HERE AS PART OF A NATIONWIDE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.-- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-OBSERVER 2 KUCHING

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO QUESTION THE INTEGRITY OF THE OBSERVER GROUP MEMBERS BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT WOULD HAVE CHOSEN THEM PROPERLY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS BARISAN NASIONAL CHAIRMAN, DENIED CLAIMS THAT HE HAD ENDORSED SOME OF THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES, SAYING HE ONLY SUPPORTED CANDIDATES OF THE BN WHICH REPRESENTED ALL COMMUNITIES.

HE WAS DISSAPPOINTED THAT INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES WERE CONTESTING IN THE GENERAL ELECTION BECAUSE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID, EVEN IF THEY WON, THEY COULD NOT SERVE THE PEOPLE.

ANY BN COMPONENT PARTY FIELDING MEMBERS AS INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES IN THE GENERAL ELECTION WOULD BE ADVISED TO EXPEL THEM AS THE BN ITSELF WAS NOT EMPOWERED TO DO SO, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE BN WOULD NOT ACCOMMODATE ANY VICTORIOUS INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE ALTHOUGH THEY SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE MOST IMPORTANTLY THE BN MUST OBSERVE DISCIPLINE.-- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-OBSERVER 3 KUCHING

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A BN ANALYSIS SHOWED THAT PAS AND DAP WERE OUT TO SPLIT MALAY AND CHINESE VOTES IN THIS GENERAL ELECTION.

HE SAID ACCORDING TO THE ANALYSIS THE PARTIES WERE TRYING TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WERE NOT COLLABORATING, BUT ACTUALLY PAS HAD CANDIDATES WHERE THE MCA WAS CONTESTING AGAINST THE DAP TO DIVERT MALAY VOTERS FROM THE MCA.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE TEND TO BELIEVE THAT LEADERS OF THE PARTI BANSAR DAYAK SARAWAK (PBDS) DID NOT ATTEND LAST NIGHT'S MEETING OF BN COMPONENT PARTY LEADERS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER HERE BECAUSE OF TECHNICAL REASONS.

HE HAD TOLD THE BN COMPONENT PARTY LEADERS THAT THE GENERAL ELECTION IS A FEDERAL-LEVEL CONTEST AND THEREFORE THERE WAS NO PLACE FOR STATE-LEVEL DISPUTES.

PBDS IS A FEDERAL BN COMPONENT PARTY BUT AN OPPOSITION AT STATE-LEVEL.

IN THE OCT 20-21 GENERAL ELECTION, THE PBDS IS CONTESTING FOR THE BN IN FOUR PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN SARAWAK.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AND HIS WIFE DATUK SERI PADUKA DATIN DR SITI HASMAH MOHAMAD ALI LATER LEFT FOR SABAH. -- BERNAMA

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