

R E131 ENG  
MAHATHIR-RAZALEIGH  
BM

SEREMBAN, OCT 15 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY REVEALED THE EXTRAVAGANT MANNER IN WHICH SEMANGAT 46 PRESIDENT TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH CONDUCTED HIMSELF WHEN HE WAS FINANCE MINISTER.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT TENGKU RAZALEIGH SPENT UP TO \$4 MILLION MERELY TO RENOVATE HIS OFFICE.

IF THE COUNTRY WAS RULED BY +THIS TYPE OF PEOPLE+, THE COUNTRY WOULD BE BANCKRUPT BECAUSE IT WOULD BE SADDLED BY FOREIGN DEBTS AS A RESULT OF LAVISH SPENDING, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD REPORTERS AFTER A MEETING WITH BARISAN NASIONAL (BN) CANDIDATES AND ELECTION WORKERS AT THE SEREMBAN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HALL HERE.

ON THE MANIFESTO OF THE GAGASAN RAKYAT (PEOPLE'S MIGHT) WHICH AMONG OTHERS PROPOSED THE ABOLITION OF SEVERAL TAXES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT WAS ONLY TO FISH FOR VOTES ADDING THAT THE PROMISES MADE BY THE OPPOSITION WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP BECAUSE OF THE HIGH COSTS INVOLVED.

ACCORDING TO HIM, IF ONE WERE TO SPEND LAVISHLY WITHOUT IMPOSING TAXES, THEN THERE WOULD BE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO BORROW. -- MORE  
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HE SAID THAT TENGKU RAZALEIGH INCURRED HUGE DEBTS WHEN HE WAS FINANCE MINISTER AND THESE DEBTS HAD TO BE BORNE BY THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.

IN HIS SPEECH, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT APPEARED TO BE PROSPEROUS DURING THE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN SOME TIME AGO BECAUSE TENGKU RAZALEIGH INCURRED DEBTS.

HE SAID THAT MANY COUNTRIES BECAME THE +SLAVE+ OF THE WORLD BANK BECAUSE OF HUGE DEBTS INCURRED TO THE POINT OF BECOMING BANCKRUPT.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE BN DID NOT MAKE UNREALISTIC PROMISES IN ITS MANIFESTO BECAUSE +WE PROMISE TO DO WHAT WE CAN DO.+ THE GOVERNMENT ALWAYS STRIVE TO REDUCE TAXES WHENEVER POSSIBLE, HE ADDED. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT TOLL COLLECTION FOR INSTANCE COULD BE REDUCED BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SCRAP IT ALTOGETHER BECAUSE THE COLLECTION WAS REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS PROJECTS INCLUDING SMALLER ROADS WHERE TOLL WAS NOT IMPOSED.

ON THE OPPOSITION'S PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE ROYALTY ON OIL FOR OIL-PRODUCING STATES, HE SAID THAT THE MOVE WOULD RESULT IN OTHER STATES BEING DEPRIVED FROM ENJOYING THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN ABLE TO SAVE SOME \$700 MILLION FOLLOWING ITS DECISION TO CONSTRUCT THE PULAU PINANG BRIDGE MUCH EARLIER.

HE SAID THAT THE COST OF CONSTRUCTION OF SUCH A BRIDGE HAD NOW INCREASED FROM \$700 MILLION THEN TO \$1,400 MILLION. -- BERNAMA  
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