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MAHATHIR-SECURITY  
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 16 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TONIGHT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION IN SABAH WOULD BE CONDUCTED SMOOTHLY DESPITE PARTI BERSATU SABAH (PBS)'S PULL-OUT FROM THE BARISAN NASIONAL (BN).

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE SECURITY FORCES WERE ON STANDBY AND THERE WAS NO CAUSE FOR ALARM OVER THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE STATE.

ASKED IF THE PBS MOVE WOULD THREATEN SECURITY, HE SAID THE MATTER DID NOT ARISE, AND THE GENERAL ELECTION WOULD PROCEED.

+THERE IS NO WAY THE ELECTION IN SABAH WILL BE POSTPONED. WE WILL NOT POSTPONE IT. WE WANT TO MAINTAIN SECURITY AND THE ELECTION CAN BE HELD, GOD WILLING,+ HE SAID.

USNO PRESIDENT TUN DATU MUSTAPHA HARUN HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION IN THE STATE BE POSTPONED. USNO AND PBS ARE BN COALITION MEMBERS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE ANTI-FEDERAL SENTIMENTS AMONG THE PEOPLE IN SABAH, HE SAID THE PEOPLE THERE WERE NOT ANTI-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PBS LEADERS, PARTICULARLY DATUK DR JEFFREY KITINGAN (SABAH FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN), WERE THE ONES WHO FUELED THESE SENTIMENTS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF SABAH TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY CONSIDERED DATUK DR KITINGAN A +MARTYR+.

WHEN ACTION WAS TAKEN AGAINST DATUK DR JEFFREY FOR FAILURE TO PAY HIS INCOME TAX, HE FELT HE HAD BEEN VICTIMISED, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, ADDING THAT THE CLAIM WAS BASELESS SINCE OTHERS DID NOT ESCAPE FROM PAYING INCOME TAX.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO COMMENTED ON PBS PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MINISTER DATUK JOSEPH PAIRIN KITINGAN'S SPEECH ABOUT THE PARTY QUITTING THE BN LAST NIGHT.

HE SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE PBS DECISION WAS BASED ON ITS CONFIDENCE THAT THE MALAYS IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA WERE ALLEGEDLY SPLIT, THAT IS 50 PER CENT SUPPORTED UMNO AND THE REMAINING 50 PERCENT, BACKED SEMANGAT 46.

THE PBS CHOSE TO BELIEVE IN SEMANGAT 46 OVER UMNO, HE SAID. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE SUPREME COUNCIL HAD STUDIED DATUK PAIRIN'S SPEECH AND FOUND THAT THE PBS AGREED WITH THE SEMANGAT 46 MANIFESTO WHICH WAS SAID TO BE IN LINE WITH THAT OF THE PARTY.

+BECAUSE THE SEMANGAT 46 MANIFESTO ACCOMMODATES ALL REQUESTS FROM THE PBS, THE PARTY DECIDED TO SUPPORT SEMANGAT 46,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE DECISION WAS ALSO BELIEVED TO BE HAVE BEEN SPURRED BY TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH'S STATEMENT EARLIER THAT SABAH AND SARAWAK COULD BECOME +KING MAKERS+.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE PBS BELIEVED THAT THE PARTIES IN SARAWAK WOULD SUPPORT ITS STAND IN THE MATTER BUT ALL THESE PARTIES INCLUDING PARTI BANGSA DAYAK SARAWAK (PBDS) HAD EXPRESSED THAT THEY WOULD REMAIN IN THE BN.

-- BERNAMA.