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MAHATHIR-PLOT RRR
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 16 (BERNAMA) -- PARTI BERSATU SABAH PRESIDENT DATUK SERI JOSEPH PAIRIN KITINGAN TOLD DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD NOT TO COME TO SABAH BEFORE THE PRIME MINISTER LEFT FOR KOTA KINABALU LAST SATURDAY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID WHEN HE TOLD DATUK PAIRIN, WHO TELEPHONED HIM, THAT THE VISIT COULD NOT BE CANCELLED BECAUSE USNO HAD INVITED HIM OVER TO SABAH, DATUK PAIRIN THEN ASKED TO VET THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH.

+I SAID I COULDN'T ALLOW THAT AND THEN DATUK PAIRIN INSISTED THAT I MAKE PLEDGES AND AGAIN I SAID I COULDN'T DO THAT,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS WHEN COMMENTING ON THE PBS'S MOVE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE BARISAN NASIONAL TONIGHT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PLEDGES THAT HE WAS ASKED TO COMMIT HIMSELF TO WERE PERTAINING TO THE PBS DEMANDS FOR INCREASED PETROLEUM ROYALTY, THE STATE'S OWN TELEVISION STATION AND A UNIVERSITY IN SABAH.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, DATUK PAIRIN HIMSELF WENT AHEAD TO MENTION THOSE DEMANDS IN HIS WELCOMING SPEECH.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE DID NOT RESPOND TO THE DEMANDS BECAUSE THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION WAS A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT PENDING THE GENERAL ELECTION.

THE MATTER COULD ONLY BE NEGOTIATED AFTER THE BN HAD FORMED THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID.-- MORE
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MAHATHIR-PLOT 2 KUALA LUMPUR RRR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID FROM DATUK PAIRIN'S ACTIONS, HE HAD FROM THE OUTSET DOUBTED THE PBS ALLEGIANCE TO THE BN.

HE SAID HE WOULD EXPECT PBS TO LEAVE THE BN SHOULD THE COALITION FAIL TO WIN IMPRESSIVELY IN THE GENERAL ELECTION AND THEN TEAM UP WITH SEMANGAT 46.

+BUT NOW HE HAS MADE THE DECISION SOONER,+ THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO SABAH, DATUK PAIRIN DID NOT GIVE ANY INDICATION THAT HE WOULD MAKE SUCH A MOVE. HE WAS IN FACT VERY WARM AND HAD PROMISED TO HELP USNO IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

THE PBS TOO HAD PROMISED NOT TO FIELD INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES EVEN IN LABUAN TO STAND AGAINST USNO AND UMNO CANDIDATES.

+NOW I KNOW THE UNDERTAKING WAS NOT GENUINE AND THEY ARE OUT TO MAKE SURE USNO CANDIDATES LOSE+. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR-PLOT 3 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE BN WOULD NOT DISCUSS WITH PBS ITS DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE BN AS LONG AS THE PARTY REMAINED UNDER THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP.

HE SAID, IT WAS NOT BN'S POLICY TO TAKE BACK A COMPONENT PARTY THAT HAD STABBED IT IN THE BACK.

+IF SOMEONE STABS US IN THE BACK, WE DON'T REMOVE THE DAGGER AND INVITE HIM TO TALK THINGS OUT,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO COMMENTED ON PBS CLAIMS THAT ITS ACTIONS STEMMED FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NOT RESPONDING TO 20 REQUESTS IT MADE OVER THE FOUR YEARS IT WAS IN THE BN.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: + WE OURSELVES DO NOT QUESTION SABAH'S FAILURE TO HONOUR ITS PLEDGES TO COOPERATE WITH THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE.+

HE BELIEVED THAT THE PBS HAD ENTERTAINED THE DESIRE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE BN AS SABAH HAD REAPED BENEFITS FROM THE STATE'S OIL REVENUE.

THIS DESIRE WAS FANNED FURTHER BY SEMANGAT 46'S PLEDGE TO INCREASE PETROLEUM ROYALTY IN ITS ELECTION MANIFESTO.-- MORE

MAHATHIR-PLOT 4 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE ROYALTY ISSUE WAS USED TO FISH FOR VOTES AND APPARENTLY HE (TENGGU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH) HAD SUCCEEDED.

+MOREOVER TENGGU RAZALEIGH HAD ONCE SAID THAT SABAH AND SARAWAK ARE 'KING MAKERS' AND THEY WILL DETERMINE WHO SHALL BE KING+.

BASED ON THIS, THE PRIME MINISTER BELIEVED A PBS PACT WITH THE OPPOSITION WAS BEHIND ITS DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE BN AND THIS WILL BECOME EVIDENT IN THE +PROSPERITY+ OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES IN THEIR CAMPAIGN.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE LEFT IT TO THE PEOPLE TO JUDGE WHETHER THE PBS ACTION WAS A BETRAYAL OR NOT.

HE SAID THE PBS MOVE DID NOT AFFECT THE CAMPAIGNING IN THE PENINSULA AND SARAWAK.

THIS IS BECAUSE ALL THE PARTIES IN SARAWAK WERE UNDER THE BN ALTHOUGH THE PARTI BANSU DAYAK SARAWAK (PBDS) WAS AN OPPOSITION IN THE STATE.-- MORE

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MAHATHIR-PLOT 5 KUALA LUMPUR

ON THE POSSIBILITY OF OTHER BN COMPONENT PARTIES FOLLOWING THE PBS MOVE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS NO OTHER BN COMPONENT THAT HAD CLOSE LINKS WITH THE PBS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OTHER PARTIES WAS SOLID.

HE SAID THAT WITH THE PBS ACTION, OPPOSITION PARTIES WOULD BE MORE SPIRITED AND EMBARK ON A LARGE-SCALE CAMPAIGNING. -- BERNAMA