

MAHATHIR-STAFF R'R'R

BM

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 23 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID ELECTION COMMISSION-APPOINTED STAFFERS WORKED FOR OPPOSITION PARTIES IN SUNDAY'S GENERAL ELECTION BY HOLDING BACK BARISAN NASIONAL SUPPORTERS FROM POLLING.

SUCH TACTIC WAS USED TO CAUSE THE DEFEAT OF BN CANDIDATES IN KELANTAN, TERENGGANU, PERAK AND PAHANG, HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER A MEETING WITH UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEMBERS AT PARTY HEADQUARTERS HERE TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE RECEIVED COMPLAINTS FROM SEVERAL BN CANDIDATES AND WORKERS THAT BN SUPPORTERS WERE HELD BACK SO MUCH SO THAT SOME HAD TO WAIT LONG, WERE BORED AND EVENTUALLY DID NOT POLL AT ALL.

+SOME VOTERS INCLUDING TOP UMNO OFFICIALS COULD NOT VOTE BECAUSE THEY WERE TOLD THEIR NAMES WERE NOT IN THE ELECTORAL ROLL FOR CERTAIN POLLING STREAMS,+ HE SAID.

+IN FACT THEIR NAMES ARE IN THE ROLL BUT WERE TOLD OTHERWISE,+ SAID DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT.-- MORE
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HE SAID THERE WERE ALSO CASES OF UNOFFICIAL ELECTORAL ROLLS BEING USED CAUSING VOTERS NOT ABLE TO TRACE THEIR NAMES.

SOME NAMES OF ORANG ASLI DISAPPEARED SUDDENLY FROM ELECTORAL ROLLS BUT UPON CHECKING IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE NAMES WERE DELIBERATELY OMITTED, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT WAS NOT THE WORK OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION BUT THAT OF DISTRICT OFFICE STAFF APPOINTED BY THE COMMISSION AND THEY WERE OPENLY HELPING THE OPPOSITION.

HE SAID HE DID NOT BLAME THE COMMISSION IN THIS MATTER BECAUSE IT WAS THE PERSONAL STAND OF THE OFFICERS CONCERNED.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID SOME OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS HAD ALSO FORCIBLY BARRED VOTERS FROM POLLING.-- MORE
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HE CITED A CASE IN TERENGGANU WHERE MORE THAN 1,000 OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS HAD SURROUNDED THE HOUSE OF AN INCUMBENT ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE TO BAR BN SUPPORTERS WHO HAD GATHERED THERE FROM POLLING.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WHO IS HOME MINISTER, SAID THE POLICE WERE HELPLESS IN TRYING TO GET THE SURROUNDED BN SUPPORTERS TO VOTE BECAUSE OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS.

HE SAID UMNO WOULD STUDY THE CONDUCT OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION-APPOINTED STAFFERS BEFORE PREPARING A DETAILED REPORT ON THE MATTER.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID UMNO TOO HAD DISCOVERED THAT OPPOSITION PARTIES HAD USED MONEY POLITICS BUT IT WOULD NOT LODGE A POLICE REPORT ON THE MATTER.

HE SAID THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL HAD NOT YET DECIDED ON WHO TO LEAD THE PARTY IN SABAH NOW THAT IT HAD EXPANDED TO THE STATE FOLLOWING THE WITHDRAWAL OF PARTI BERSATU SABAH FROM THE BN.-- MORE