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R E518 AAE
MAHATHIR-SABAH
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, NOV 9 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE SABAH GOVERNMENT WAS DELIBERATELY TRYING TO FOSTER ANTI-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FEELINGS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE STATE THROUGH THE SETTING UP OF AN INSTITUTE PROPOSED BY THE RULING PARTI BERSATU SABAH (PBS).

HE SAID THE PROPOSED INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY WAS SIMILAR IN CONCEPT TO THE CHARACTER-BUILDING CENTRES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA BUT IT WAS AIMED AT +CREATING AN ANTI-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPIRIT+ AMONG THE PEOPLE OF SABAH.

+SABAH RESIDENTS, PARTICULARLY THE YOUTH, WILL BE TRAINED AT THE INSTITUTE TO BE ANTI-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OR, IN OTHER WORDS, THEY WILL BE BRAINWASHED,+ HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS BY REPORTERS WHO ASKED HIM ABOUT ACTIONS BY THE SABAH GOVERNMENT SAID TO BE OPPOSED TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES.

CHIEF MINISTER AND PBS PRESIDENT DATUK JOSEPH PAIRIN KITINGAN RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THE PBS PLAN TO BUILD THE INSTITUTE TO TRAIN PARTY CADRES TO FACE FUTURE CHALLENGES. THE TEACHING STAFF, DRAWN FROM INTELLECTUALS AND PROFESSIONALS, WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE PBS SUPREME COUNCIL.

DATUK PAIRIN HAD SAID THAT THE INSTITUTE WOULD PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMMES RELATED TO POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION, CIVICS AND MORALS, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE SPIRIT OF SELF-RELIANCE. -- MORE

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ASKED WHETHER THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE ACTION AGAINST SABAH IF IT WAS FOUND THAT THE PROGRAMMES AT THE INSTITUTE JEOPARDISED NATIONAL SECURITY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DID NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT APPROPRIATE ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN.

+SO FAR, THERE IS NO PROOF THAT THE BRAINWASHING EFFORTS ARE JEOPARDISING SECURITY BUT WE WILL BE OBSERVING FURTHER,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO STUDY WHETHER THE +BRAINWASHING+ WOULD LEAD TO ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS ACTION TO PULL OUT SABAH FROM THE MALAYSIAN FEDERATION AND OTHER ACTIONS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THOUGH SUCH BRAINWASHING EFFORTS WERE CONSIDERED THE SABAH GOVERNMENT'S RIGHT, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALSO HAD THE RIGHT TO POINT OUT TO THE PEOPLE OF SABAH THAT THEY ARE ALSO MALAYSIANS.

THIS WAS BECAUSE MANY SABAH PEOPLE DID NOT HATE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OR THE PEOPLE IN THE PENINSULA BUT WHAT MADE SOME OF THEM DO SO WAS THE BRAINWASHING EFFORTS, HE ADDED.

HE SAID IT WAS CLEAR NOW THAT THE SABAH GOVERNMENT DID NOT AT ALL ABIDE BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES, INCLUDING ON THE QUESTION OF TIMBER.

HE ADDED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD FOR A LONG TIME BEEN ADVISING SABAH TO REDUCE PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF ROUND LOGS IN ORDER TO CONSERVE THEM FOR DOWNSTREAM ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRY. --
MORE

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CONTINUED LOGGING ACTIVITIES WOULD HAVE A GREATER IMPACT ON SABAH AS THE SOURCE OF REVENUE WOULD BE DEPLETED, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DID NOT HAVE THE POWER TO OBSTRUCT SABAH'S POLICY ON TIMBER AS THIS POWER WAS VESTED WITH THE STATE GOVERNMENT.

LAWS PERTAINING TO STATE GOVERNMENT JURISDICTION COULD NOT BE AMENDED WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT CONCERNED, HE SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION.

ASKED ABOUT SABAH'S REQUEST THAT IT BE PAID COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF REVENUE IF ROUND LOG PRODUCTION WAS STOPPED, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE BURDEN SHOULD BE JOINTLY BORNE.

COMMENTING ON THE TERMINATION OF THE SERVICES OF TAN SRI ZAIN AZRAAI AS CHAIRMAN OF SABAH FOREST INDUSTRIES (SFI), THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAD A RIGHT TO DO SO.

+BUT I KNOW THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS THE GUARANTOR OF SFI LOANS AND HAD ALSO GIVEN ALLOCATIONS TO OVERCOME THE COMPANY'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

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HE SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS STUDYING THE EXTENT OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS SFI, PARTICULARLY NOW THAT IT HAD NO REPRESENTATIVE IN THE COMPANY'S MANAGEMENT.

+IF WE HAVE NO POWER TO MANAGE SOMETHING WHERE WE ARE THE GUARANTORS AND PROVIDERS OF FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS, THEN WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE THE GUARANTORS,+ HE ADDED.

ON THE APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW SENATE PRESIDENT, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AND THE APPOINTMENT WOULD BE MADE SOON.

DEPUTY SENATE PRESIDENT, DATUK CHAN CHONG TAK, HAS BEEN MENTIONED AS THE LIKELY CHOICE FOR THE POST. -- BERNAMA

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