

CNS4292

R PE 21-02 00234 EA519

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Mahathir-Umno (Requested repetition)

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KOTA KINABALU, Feb 21<sup>st</sup> (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today launched the entry of Umno to Sabah and said the move paves the way for the Prime Minister of Malaysia to come from among Sabahans one day, provided they hold true to the qualities of a Malaysian. (P)

The Prime Minister dismissed claims by certain quarters that Umno's venture into Sabah was a form of colonisation of the state and its people by the party and the federal government.

He said that if a Sabahan becomes Umno president, and if Umno tradition is maintained and the party is strong, +God willing, the Umno president from Sabah will become prime minister.+

+However, Sabahans must behave not as Sabahan but must claim themselves to be Malaysian and that claim must be substantiated and acceptable,+ he said when opening Umno's 23rd general assembly and launching the entry of Umno to Sabah, at the Dewan Perdana Wisma MUIS here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said the possibility of a Sabahan becoming prime minister would remain just that if an Umno leader from Sabah were to contest a post in the party's Supreme Council on the platform +we are Sabahans+.

+We must carry ourselves as Bumiputeras and Malays who are members of Umno,+ he said. -- more

♥21/02/20-15MST

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Mahathir-Umno 2 Kota Kinabalu (Requested repetition)

Nearly 10,000 people of various ethnic groups gathered inside and outside the hall during the function. Leaders who were present included Umno president Tun Datu Haji Mustapha Datu Harun, Information Minister and Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, International Trade and Industry Minister and Wanita Umno leader Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Public Enterprises Minister Datuk Dr Yusof Nor, Defence Minister and Umno Youth leader Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Melaka Chief Minister Tan Sri Haji Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said allegations by certain quarters that Umno was coming to Sabah to colonise the state and people were made out of the fear that Umno would pose a threat to their position.

On the contrary, he said, Umno only intended to serve and stive for the people of the state in a more effective manner.

He said Umno wanted to pool the resources of the Bumiputeras in the state with the objective of taking over administration of the state, now held by a government whose ministers are +menteri balak+ (timber ministers).

+We want a Sabah government whose ministers are always in contact with the people at all levels, who listen to their grievances, and who strive to overcome all their problems,+ he added. -- more

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Mahathir-Umno 3 Kota Kinabalu (Requested repetition)

He also said that the Sabah state government that Umno will establish after the next election would cooperate with the federal government. In this connection, he suggested that the state Umno open its doors to every Malay and Bumiputera who wished to join the party.

He said these people could also be those who might have at one time betrayed Usno, including members and leaders of the ruling Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS), because restricting membership to Usno members would not take Umno far.

+If the Umno membership in the state is restricted to Usno members, our achievement in the next election may not be better than that of Usno,+ he said, referring to the 12 seats won by Usno in the last state election. The Sabah assembly has 48 seats.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said a political party was established not to only take in members but to serve as a machinery to achieve the objectives of the party and fulfill the aspirations of the people.

He invited all Usno members to make a sacrifice and join Umno, the pillar of federal government administration.

He said that to achieve the objectives of its struggle, Umno, which was the protector of the Malays in the peninsula, made a big sacrifice by agreeing to the decision to name Tanah Melayu, Sabah and Sarawak as Malaysia when the federation was established in 1963. -- more

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Mahathir-Umno 4 Kota Kinabalu (Requested repetition)

+You can see how great our sacrifice was; we agreed that the name Tanah Melayu meaning Land of the Malays be changed to Malaysia in the interest and for the wellbeing of the people of the various races and ethnic groups in the archipelago,+ he said.

He said Umno, in its efforts to achieve the objectives of its struggle, was prepared to take one step backwards to move several steps forward.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir gave the assurance that Sabah Umno would eventually be led by a Sabahan and that the appointment of Deputy Prime Minister Encik Ghafar Baba as state Umno liaison chief was only temporary, until the setting up of branches and divisions and the recruitment of members had been completed.

The prime minister advised against dissolving Usno although a majority of its leaders and members had joined Umno because there was a possibility other people might make use of the Usno name, flag and symbol and other things associated with the party.

+When the Barisan Nasional was established in 1970, we retained Alliance because we did not want other people to form Alliance.

+Therefore, Usno must remain, its symbol must remain, its name must remain and its flag must remain but the party will be managed only by a small group of people,+ he said. -- Bernama

♥21/02/20-18MST