

24 JUL 1999

Razaleigh-Apology

APOLOGY MEANT TO CREATE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING, SAYS KU LI

KOTA BAHARU, July 24 (Bernama) -- Kelantan Umno Liaison chairman Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah explained that his open apology to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at a function in conjunction with the Prime Minister's visit to the state two days ago was aimed at clearing doubts over their relationship following their past dispute.

He said the apology which was sincere was also to create a sense of deep understanding between all Umno members so that it would be easier for the party to face the coming general election.

"No one can use the issue (on the dispute) to cause friction among us," he told reporters after chairing a meeting of the Communications Committee of the Kelantan Umno Liaison Body, here today.

During the historic event in front of about 2,000 members of the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties, Tengku Razaleigh apologised to Umno and the Prime Minister for his actions which led to the party being declared unlawful in 1987.

Dr Mahathir, as Umno president, welcomed the apology from Tengku Razaleigh, and in turn sought forgiveness from the former president of the now defunct Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) if he (Tengku Razaleigh) harboured any ill feeling against him.

Tengku Razaleigh said Umno members including former members of S46, who are now Umno members, should seek apology from one another if there had been any dispute between them.

"Islam encourages (it), the Malay culture also encourages us to apologise sincerely among us even if it is over a small matter. Although we don't commit any wrong or mistake, who knows if we had erred or hurt the feelings of others unintentionally," he said.

Asked whether he and Umno were prepared to forgive PAS members who wished to join Umno, Tengku Razaleigh said: "It is not a problem with Umno, we are prepared to forgive, just waiting for PAS members to join Umno."

Meanwhile, Tengku Razaleigh who is also Gua Musang Umno division chief said the Kelantan Umno Communications Committee was drawing up a programme to go on an information campaign throughout the state and coordinate activities between Umno and federal government agencies to avoid duplication.

"We feel that a properly planned programme would give a wider impact on the people. We must create awareness among the people regarding the purpose of our activities in a state such as Kelantan, such as why we need to take over the government in Kelantan after the coming general election," he said.

He said the committee was planning a massive gathering to celebrate the national day celebrations on Aug 31.

Also present at the Communications Committee meeting were deputy chairman of the Kelantan Umno State Liaison Body Datuk Annuar Musa, Kelantan Umno Information chief Datuk Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir, Kelantan Umno secretary Datuk Ahmad Shahibuddin Mohd Noor and Jeli Umno division head, Datuk Mustapa Mohamad.

--BERNAMA

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