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MAHATHIR

(EMBARGO: FOR AUTOMATIC RELEASE AFTER 1 P.M. TODAY, OCT. 23.)

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT. 23¹⁷⁴ (BERNAMA)-- EDUCATION MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED HAS CALLED ON DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO BE MORE FAIR AND CONSIDERATE IN THEIR PRICING POLICY, ESPECIALLY OF PRIMARY COMMODITIES FROM DEVELOPING NATIONS.

HE SAID IF THEY DID THIS, MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WOULD BE MUCH WEALTHIER THAN THEY WERE NOW.

AND BEING RICHER, THEY WOULD NOT ONLY DEPEND LESS ON UNESCO AID BUT MIGHT EVEN CONTRIBUTE TO IT.

DR. MAHATHIR WAS ADDRESSING THE 18TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENCE AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION IN PARIS. A TEXT OF HIS SPEECH WAS RELEASED HERE TODAY.

HE SAID MALAYSIA'S PRIMARY PRODUCTS HAD ALWAYS BEEN SUBJECTED TO THE VAGARIES OF WORLD COMMODITY PRICES CONTROLLED BY DEVELOPED NATIONS.

+THE PRICES OF MALAYSIAN TIN AND RUBBER HAVE NO BEARING ON THEIR USEFULNESS IN MANUFACTURING,+ HE SAID.

+CONSEQUENTLY THE WEALTH OF MALAYSIA IS NOT COMMENSURATE WITH THE INDUSTRY AND INTELLIGENCE OF HER PEOPLE.+ -- BERNAMA MORE 1157/1B

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→ THE MINISTER STRESSED THAT ANALYSIS OF UNESCO AID SHOWED THAT THE AID WAS MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN THE RECIPIENT COUNTRY WAS BETTER OFF. FOR EXAMPLE, IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION THROUGH UNESCO AID WAS MORE WIDESPREAD IN A COUNTRY WITH A WELL-FINANCED COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM THAN A POORLY-FINANCED ONE.

HE HOPED THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S EXTRAORDINARY SESSION IN 1975 WOULD ACT ON THE PROBLEM OF UNFAIR COMMODITY PRICES.

DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SPOKE STRONGLY AGAINST THE SPREAD OF UNDESIRABLE CULTURES TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

PRACTICES LIKE DRUG-TAKING, HIPPIISM AND GENERAL DISRESPECT FOR THE LAW WOULD IMPEDE PROGRESS AND RETARD EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

A UNESCO PROJECT, HOWEVER, WAS HELPING TO DEVELOP INDIGENOUS CULTURES AS A +BARRIER AGAINST THE DEVITALISING INFLUENCE+ OF SUCH WESTERN CULTURES.

+IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THIS ASPECT OF UNESCO'S WORK WILL BE GIVEN NEW DIMENSIONS AND A CONCERTED EFFORT BE MADE IN ALL REGIONS TO BUILD UP RESISTENCE TOWARDS DESTRUCTIVE INFLUENCES BY PRESERVING AND DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS NATIONAL CULTURES COMPATIBLE WITH PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA 12 03/1B 99