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PARLIAMENT-EDUCATION 1974

KUALA LUMPUR, NOV. 11 (BERNAMA) -- A CONFERENCE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS OF THE FIVE UNIVERSITIES TO STREAMLINE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIVERSITIES WAS HELD HERE TODAY.

THE CONFERENCE, CHAIRED BY EDUCATION MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED, WAS TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY UNHEALTHY COMPETITION BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITIES.

DR. MAHATHIR, REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED IN THE DEBATE ON THE ROYAL ADDRESS IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT, SAID THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE HELD FROM TIME TO TIME.

HE WAS REPLYING TO ENCIK S. SAMY VELU (BN-SUNGEI SIPUT), WHO SUGGESTED THAT AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM BE INTRODUCED FOR UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES PRACTISED BY THE UNIVERSITIES WERE SUPERVISED AND CO-ORDINATED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO ENSURE A BALANCE BETWEEN THEM.

HE REFUTED THE ALLEGATIONS OF THE BARISAN NASIONAL MEMBER FOR TELUK KEMANG, ENCIK K. PATMANABAN, THAT RACIAL POLARISATION WAS ON THE UPSURGE IN THE VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN THE COUNTRY.--BERNAMA MORE 2032/LK

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DR. MAHATHIR SAID IN THE PAST THE COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING, INCLUDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, COMPRISED STUDENTS FROM ONE PARTICULAR RACE BUT THE SITUATION HAD NOW CHANGED.

THE UNIVERSITI KEBANGSAAN, WHICH SINCE ITS INCEPTION HAD TAKEN IN ONLY BUMIPUTRA STUDENTS, WAS NOW ACCEPTING NON-BUMIPUTRAS.

HE ADDED THAT DUE TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY, THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT ENROLMENT BY RACIAL BREAKDOWN HAD BEEN REMEDIATED, BEARING IN MIND THAT THE STUDENT POPULATION PRESENTLY STUDYING OVERSEAS ALSO FORMED AN UNHEALTHY POLARISATION.

DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SPOKE ON THE POINT RAISED BY DATUK STEPHEN YONG (BN-PADAWAN), WHO HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE DECLINING MORALS OF THE PRESENT GENERATION, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTHS.

HE SAID HIS MINISTRY WAS AWARE OF THE MATTER AND THIS WOULD BE ONE OF THE PROBLEMS TO BE STUDIED BY THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ITS DELIBERATIONS.--BERNAMA MORE 2045/MM

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REFERRING TO TEXTBOOK AID, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE BOOKS WERE BEING DISTRIBUTED TO THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS.

ON COMPLAINTS THAT THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH FACILITIES FOR THE STUDY OF CHINESE AND TAMIL LANGUAGES, HE SAID THAT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ENGLISH TYPE SCHOOLS WHICH HAD BEEN CHANGED TO THE NATIONAL TYPE, CHINESE AND TAMIL SCHOOLS STILL EXIST FOR THOSE WISHING TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO SUCH SCHOOLS.

FOR THOSE WHO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO ENGLISH SCHOOLS, THERE WAS NO REASON FOR THEM TO COMPLAIN OF BEING DEPRIVED OF CHINESE AND TAMIL LANGUAGES BECAUSE BY THEIR CHOICE THEY HAD AUTOMATICALLY REJECTED THE STUDY OF THE TWO LANGUAGES.

HE ASSURED THAT THE MATTER WOULD ALSO BE LOOKED INTO BY THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

TURNING TO THE WIDESPREAD BOYCOTT OF CLASSES BY STUDENTS, THE MINISTER SAID HIS MINISTRY HAD ADOPTED A NEW ATTITUDE AND ITS RESULTS COULD BE SEEN SHORTLY.

--BERNAMA 2050/MM