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SEMINAR-WOMEN

KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 15 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA CANNOT AFFORD THE TYPE OF +SLOGAN-SHOUTING, ABRASIVE AND DISRUPTING+ CRUSADE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AS FOUND IN WESTERN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, LDR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED SAID TODAY.

HE SAID DEVELOPED WESTERN COUNTRIES COULD AFFORD THE +LUXURY OF WILD CRUSADES+ AS WOMEN AND MEN COMPETED WITH EACH OTHER TO PROVE WHO WAS MORE LIBERATED AND WHO WAS EQUAL TO WHOM.

THE EDUCATION MINISTER WAS SPEAKING AT A SEMINAR ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN ORGANISATIONS HERE.

HE SAID IN HIS WORKING PAPER ON +PARTNERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT+ THAT MALAYSIA COULD NOT AFFORD THIS AND NEEDED TO RETAIN A REALISTIC PERSPECTIVE.

HE ADDED THAT IRRESPECTIVE OF WHERE OR HOW THE WOMEN WORKED MEN AND WOMEN WERE PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT.

+PARTNERSHIP DOES NOT IMPLY PHYSICAL EQUALITY BUT MERELY MEANS MUTUAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARD AN OBJECTIVE OR OBJECTIVES,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA MORE 1742/LK

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DR. MAHATHIR SAID AS A DEVELOPING COUNTRY MALAYSIA NEEDED THE ENERGY AND EFFORTS OF ITS WOMEN MORE THAN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH THEIR LIBERATED WOMEN.

TO TAP THIS SOURCE OF POWER THE WOMEN MUST BE GIVEN THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING THEIR TALENTS.

ALTHOUGH A LITTLE DISCRIMINATION DID OCCUR HERE AND THERE, EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN THIS COUNTRY WERE OPENED TO GIRLS AND

THEIR PRESENCE IN EVERY FIELD SHOWED THAT THEY TOO WERE EQUALLY CAPABLE OF PARTICIPATING IN ALL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. 127

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THESE WOMEN, TRAINED, ABLE AND WILLING WERE TRULY THE PARTNERS OF MEN IN DEVELOPMENT.

IN ANOTHER PAPER ON +WOMAN AND THE LAW+, THE MINISTER OF LAW AND ATTORNEY GENERAL, TAN SRI ABDUL KADIR YUSOF, SAID THE LAWS IN MALAYSIA WERE PROGRESSIVE AND JUST AND AFFORDED EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN TO ADVANCE.

WHATEVER DISCRIMINATION THERE WAS, HE SAID, STEMMED ONLY FROM PERSONAL ATTITUDE WHICH OUGHT TO BE CHANGED. -- BERNAMA MORE 1746/

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TAN SRI KADIR SAID THE ACHIEVEMENTS SCORED BY WOMEN IN VARIOUS WALKS OF LIFE SHOULD BY NOW CONVINCING US THAT GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY WOMEN WERE CAPABLE OF DOING ALMOST ANYTHING THAT MEN WERE CAPABLE OF DOING.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALWAYS GIVEN A SYMPATHETIC HEARING TO THE WOMEN'S GRIEVANCES AND ASSURED THAT IT WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO.

DURING DISCUSSIONS, THE PARTICIPANTS URGED THAT ALL AVAILABLE MANPOWER RESOURCES SHOULD BE FULLY DEVELOPED AND UTILISED WITHOUT ANY DISCRIMINATION OF SEXES.

THEY FELT THAT WHILE TAKING PART IN DEVELOPMENT, WOMEN MUST NOT FORGET THEIR IMPORTANT ROLE AS WIVES AND MOTHERS.

THEY ALSO FELT THAT IN FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY, WOMEN SHOULD REALISE THAT IT DID NOT MEAN THAT THERE SHOULD BE 50-50 PARTICIPATION IN ALL FIELDS OF ACTIVITIES. -- BERNAMA 1754/LK