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33:

MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 15 (BERNAMA)— THE MASS MEDIA HAS BEEN URGED TO USE ITS POWERFUL INFLUENCE CONSTRUCTIVELY FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTRY.

P EDUCATION MINISTER, DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID HERE TODAY THE MASS MEDIA HAD TREMENDOUS POWER OF WIELDING INFLUENCE, SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION AND MASS CONVERSION.

IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THOSE WHO HAD THIS POWER DID NOT ABUSE IT, HE SAID AT THE OPENING OF A TWO-DAY SEMINAR ON +NEW CONCEPTS IN COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENTZ HERE.

DESCRIBING THE MASS MEDIA AS A POTENT WEAPON, DR. MAHATHIR SAID IT SHOULD BE USED CONSTRUCTIVELY JUST AS A SURGEON HANDLED HIS KNIFE TO HEAL AND NOT TO KILL.

HE ALSO CRITICISED THE MASS MEDIA FOR OCCASIONAL INCORRECT REPORTING AND QUOTATIONS AND FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO ACCEPT CRITICISM.

THE SEMINAR, ORGANISED BY THE MARA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY'S SCHOOL OF MASS COMMUNICATION, IS ATTENDED BY ABOUT 50 PARTICIPANTS FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT AND FIRMS. — BERNAMA 1323/1B

71:

MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR (REOPENS ITEM 33)

+IN THE CASE OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST DRUG-ABUSE IN SCHOOLS FOR EXAMPLE, THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY MISQUOTES AND SO MUCH WRONG REPORTING THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP ON CORRECTING THESE MISTAKES, + HE SAID.

+AND THE MEDIA BEING A POWER INTO ITSELF IS NOT TOO TOLERANT OF CRITICISMS.+

HE ADDED THAT DRUG-ABUSE WAS ONLY ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE COUNTRY.

WRONG HANDLING OF THESE PROBLEMS COULD BE DESTRUCTIVE.

+WE HAVE THEREFORE TO BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL OF THE ROLE OF MASS-COMMUNICATIONS IN THIS COUNTRY.

+FREEDOM IS ALL VERY WELL, BUT THE FREEDOM THAT WILL LEAD TO DESTRUCTION IS AS MUCH TO BE CONDEMNED AS ANYTHING ELSE WHICH WILL CAUSE DESTRUCTION,+ DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

— BERNAMA 1535/SZ