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ALOR STAR, JAN. 30 (BERNAMA) — DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE EDUCATION MINISTRY HAD SPENT ABOUT \$131 MILLION TO SUPPLY BOOKS UNDER THE TEXTBOOK LOAN SCHEME UNTIL NEXT YEAR.

THE SCHEME, WHICH WAS LAUNCHED IN 1975, PROVIDED LOANS OF TEXTBOOKS TO ALL STUDENTS OF NATIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND ALSO TO THOSE ELIGIBLE IN NATIONAL TYPE CHINESE AND TAMIL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

HE SAID THAT THE SCHEME WAS ANY IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT SCHEME TO ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS, RICH OR POOR, WOULD RECEIVE BETTER EDUCATION. IT WAS ALSO TO CHECK THE DROP-OUT RATE.

“I HAVE GIVEN THE FIGURE OF EXPENDITURE SO THAT THE PEOPLE WILL REALISE HOW HARD THE GOVERNMENT IS WORKING TO RAISE THE PEOPLE'S LIVING STANDARDS THROUGH EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE IN THE RURAL AREAS,” HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1455 SZ

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THIS WHEN HE OPENED THE \$140,000 EXTENSION BUILDING FOR THE NATIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL AT GUAR KEPAYANG, 16 MILES FROM HERE.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT SCHOOLS WOULD NOT PROGRESS IF THERE WERE NO INVOLVEMENT AND CLOSE COOPERATION AMONG THE TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS.

EFFORTS BASED ON SUCH COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING WERE NEEDED, HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT THOUGH THE PROGRESS IN EDUCATION SO FAR HAD BEEN ENCOURAGING MUCH MORE HAD TO BE DONE TO ACHIEVE GREATER AND MORE MEANINGFUL PROGRESS.

IT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS TO FIND WAYS TO ENSURE THAT SUCH COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING WAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED, HE SAID.

BERNAMA MORE 1500/SZ

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PARENT, TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS THAT WERE EFFICIENT AND HAD GOOD LEADERSHIP COULD CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AMONG THOSE CONCERNED FOR GREATER PROGRESS IN EDUCATION, HE SAID.

PARENTS, SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY SHOULD POOL RESOURCES AND COOPERATE IN NATION-BUILDING BASED ON PROGRESSIVE AND POSITIVE VALUES.

HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO STUDY AND DEVELOP ITS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME BECAUSE IT BELIEVED THAT EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY EDUCATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, WAS AN IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF A DEVELOPING COUNTRY SUCH AS MALAYSIA. — BERNAMA 1503/SZ

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