

MAHATHIR-EXPERTS
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PORT DICKSON, APRIL 20 (BERNAMA) — DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS SUGGESTED THAT A CORPS OF LOCAL EXPERTS COMPRISING GOVERNMENT OFFICERS BE SET UP TO TONE DOWN THE COUNTRY'S DEPENDENCE OF FOREIGN EXPERTS.

SUCH A CORPS COULD BE FORMED THROUGH TRAINING AND PROVIDING AS MUCH EXPERIENCE AS POSSIBLE TO QUALIFIED AND CAPABLE OFFICERS, HE ADDED.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER MADE THE SUGGESTION AT THE OPENING OF A NATIONAL SEMINAR ON COORDINATION OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM AND RESEARCH ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACT HERE TODAY.

SECRETARIES GENERAL, DIRECTORS GENERAL OF MINISTRIES AND SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS ATTENDED THE SEMINAR.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR POINTED OUT THAT SHORTCOMINGS IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WERE DUE TO THE LACK OF WHOLEHEARTED RESEARCH.

THIS ITSELF WAS DUE TO THE SHORTAGE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESEARCH EXPERTS FROM AMONG LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS THEMSELVES, HE ADDED. — BERNAMA MORE 1205/SZ

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AS SUCH, VARIOUS FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND EVALUATION OF BIG DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WERE STILL BEING CARRIED OUT BY FOREIGN EXPERTS OR CONSULTANTS.

HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH SUCH EXPERTS WERE USUALLY WIDELY EXPERIENCED AND HIGHLY TRAINED, THEY FAILED TO GRASP THE WAY OF THINKING, CULTURE AND PROBLEMS OF THE MALAYSIAN SOCIETY.

AS A RESULT, THEIR CONCLUSIVE PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FAILED TO INCORPORATE SOCIAL AND COMMUNAL ASPECTS WHICH MIGHT EVENTUALLY EFFECT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECTS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID ONLY LOCAL OFFICERS COULD APPREHEND SUCH PROBLEMS NOT ONLY FROM THE ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT, BUT ALSO FROM THE ASPECT OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES, EVALUATION AND NORMS.

HE STRESSED THAT ONE ASPECT OF DEVELOPMENT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE WAS THE DEGREE OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMITMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECTS. — BERNAMA MORE 1215/SZ

MAHATHIR-EXPERTS 3 PORT DICKSON

AS SUCH, RESEARCH ON DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION WHICH DID NOT INCORPORATE SUCH PROBLEMS COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED COMPLETE AND DETAILED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD APPROVED MORE THAN 20,000 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UNDER THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN.

+WE DO NOT KNOW YET TO WHAT EXTENT THESE PROJECTS WILL REALLY BENEFIT THE PEOPLE, + HE ADDED.

HE ALSO SPOKE OF THE MILLIONS OF RINGGIT SPENT TO HELP THE POOR YET POVERTY COULD NOT BE ERADICATED AS AN INDIFFERENT ATTITUDE LESSENE THE EFFECT OF SUCH AID TO THEM.

SUCH AN ATTITUDE COULD FRUSTRATE THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO UPLIFT THE LIVING STANDARDS OF THOSE LESS FORTUNATE.
— BERNAMA MORE 1255/SZ

MAHATHIR-EXPERTS 4 PORT DICKSON

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT POVERTY WAS NOT JUST AN ECONOMIC PROBLEM.

AS SUCH, ANY PROGRAMME OR EVALUATION SYSTEM OF DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT STRESS ON ECONOMIC ASPECTS ONLY BUT SHOULD ALSO EMBODY SOCIAL ASPECTS SUCH AS EDUCATION, HEALTH, ATTITUDE TO LIFE AND WELFARE.

THOSE BELONGING TO THE LESS FORTUNATE GROUP NOT ONLY LACKED GOOD INCOME SOURCES BUT ALSO THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL TO EXPLOIT SUCH SOURCES OR TO FIND WAYS TO IMPROVE THEM OR FIND NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

THEIR WAY OF THINKING WAS ALSO DIFFERENT DUE TO A DISADVANTAGED WAY OF LIFE.

GIVEN SUCH A SITUATION, THEY FAILED TO MAKE USE OF THE FACILITIES AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES MADE AVAILABLE TO THEM BY THE GOVERNMENT. -- BERNAMA MORE 1300/SZ

MAHATHIR-EXPERTS 5 PORT DICKSON

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THEY COULD NOT FULFILL THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND OFFICES IN GIVING OUT THE AIDS AND FACILITIES.

SOMETIMES, THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED WERE NOT REALISTIC AND WERE MADE WITHOUT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT CIRCUMSTANCES GOVERNING THE PEOPLE'S WAY OF LIFE.

INFORMATION ON HOW TO OBTAIN AIDS AND FACILITIES WERE ALSO NOT CLEAR OR FAILED TO REACH THOSE THEY WERE INTENDED FOR.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT THESE SHORTCOMINGS SHOULD BE OVERCOME AS THE GOVERNMENT WAS DETERMINED TO GIVE ALL AVAILABLE NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO THOSE LESS FORTUNATE TO ENABLE THEM TO ESCAPE FROM THEIR PLIGHT.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE EVALUATION SYSTEM ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRESS ALA OPERATIONS ROOM WHICH EMPHASISED ON PHYSICAL, MATERIALISTIC AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS BE REVISED THOROUGHLY.

MAHATHIR-EXPERTS 6 PORT DICKSON

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE CONTROL OF PROJECTS WAS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WERE IMPLEMENTED SMOOTHLY AND SHORTCOMINGS DETECTED AND OVERCOME EARLY.

HOWEVER, THE EVALUATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT WAS ALSO IMPORTANT AND REQUIRED A DIFFERENT APPROACH.

IT WAS ONLY WHEN ECONOMIC PROGRESS MOVED SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL PROGRESS THAT DEVELOPMENT ACTUALLY ATTAINED ITS FULL MEANING AND BROUGHT STABILITY TO THE COUNTRY.

HE URGED SECRETARIES GENERAL, DIRECTORS GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERS TO ADOPT A POSITIVE AND FIRM ATTITUDE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR STRESSED THAT THERE WERE TWO TYPES OF OFFICERS WHO WERE NOT EFFECTIVE AND WERE DIFFICULT TO ASSIST.

THERE WERE THOSE WHO HAD +CLOSED MINDS+ WHO DECLINED TO ACCEPT NEW CHALLENGES AND WHO COULD NOT UNDERSTAND NEW PROBLEMS AND WISHED TO STICK TO OLD PROCEDURES. -- BERNAMA MORE 1640/SZ

MAHATHIR-EXPERTS 7 PORT DICKSON

THEN THERE WERE THOSE WHO WERE NOT RESPONSIBLE, HAD NO MOTIVATION OR SELF-DISCIPLINE.

HE STRESSED THAT IF THE WEAKNESSES OF SUCH OFFICERS WERE ALLOWED TO GO UNCORRECTED, THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WOULD BE DISRUPTED.

THE MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT, ENCIK RICHARD HO, SUGGESTED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES CENTRE SET UP LIBRARY FACILITIES AT STATE LEVEL.

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE CENTRE BE USED AS A NUCLEUS TO COLLATE RESEARCH FINDINGS IN VIEW OF ITS ACTIVITIES IN PREPARING REGULAR BIBLIOGRAPHIES ON DEVELOPMENT.

MEETINGS SHOULD ALSO BE HELD FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN RESEARCH WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF CREATING A SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION AMONG THEM.

THIS WOULD BRING ABOUT A BASIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED COORDINATED AND PROVEN.

ALSO PRESENT WERE MENTRI BESAR, DATUK MANSOR OTHMAN AND CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT, TAN SRI ABDULLAH SALLEH. — BERNAMA