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PENANG, JUNE 9 (BERNAMA) - DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME WILL CREATE AN AWARENESS FOR THE NEED FOR COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, SPORTS, CULTURE, ECONOMY AND SOCIETY.

THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME WAS A TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION CHANNEL BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE.

THE PROGRAMME WAS ALSO ONE SOURCE OF FEEDBACK FROM THE PEOPLE HE SAID WHEN HE OPENED THE SECOND MALAYSIAN COMMUNITY RELATIONS CONFERENCE HERE.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO FUNCTION MORE EFFICIENTLY WITH THE SUCH FEEDBACK.

THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME COMMITTEE WOULD TAKE OVER THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOODWILL COMMITTEE THAT WAS SET UP IN HASTE DURING THE LAST EMERGENCY.

THE DECISION, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID, WAS MADE BECAUSE THERE WAS STILL A NEED TO PROMOTE GOODWILL AMONG THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES, AND BESIDES, THERE WAS ALSO A NEED FOR MORE EFFECTIVE AND ORDERLY COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

— BERNAMA MORE 1655/SZ

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AS THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME COVERED ALL FIELDS OF ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, IT SHOULD BRING ALL COMMUNITY RELATIONS ACTIVITIES UNDER ITS UMBRELLA.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH A PROGRAMME REQUIRED THE SINCERE COOPERATION OF EVERY CITIZEN, GOVERNMENT AGENCY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS.

THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME WAS A PROGRAMME THAT WOULD TEACH THE PEOPLE TO BE SELF-RELIANT TO CREATE A STABLE, PEACEFUL AND PROPEROUS COUNTRY.

IN VIEW OF THIS, THE PEOPLE MUST REALISE THAT THE COUNTRY HAD MORE HAVE-NOTS THAN HAVES AND AS SUCH A COMMON PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE WOULD BE THE KEY TO A BETTER LIFE.

THE GOVERNMENT ALSO NEEDED THE COOPERATION OF THE PEOPLE TO MOULD A WAY OF LIFE FOR THE FUTURE GENERATION, HE SAID.

ON THE CONFERENCE, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT WOULD DISCUSS VARIOUS IMPORTANT MATTERS AND COME UP WITH RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY LIFE.

— BERNAMA MORE 1600/SZ

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THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATING THE URBAN COMMUNITY WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THE PEOPLE IF THEY WERE GIVEN SYMBOLS THEY COULD UNDERSTAND.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT WELFARE AND OTHER PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT SHOULD BE RELATED TO THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND MAKE THE PEOPLE REALISE THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES WOULD BE BENEFICIAL IN THE FUTURE.

THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME WAS IMPORTANT IN ALL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS BECAUSE USUALLY IN THE URBAN AREAS, CROSS-CURRENTS IN THE WAY OF LIFE IN THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES COULD BE FOUND. THIS SUBJECT NEEDED SPECIAL ATTENTION.

HE SAID THAT THE SUBJECTS SUCH AS JOB OPPORTUNITIES, ACCOMMODATION, EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, TRAFFIC PROBLEMS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY BECAUSE ALL THESE FACTORS DETERMINED THE QUALITY OF LIFE THE PEOPLE ASPIRED.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER THEN URGED THE NATIONAL UNITY BOARD TO CONCENTRATE ON THIS PROGRAMME WHICH WAS TO ENABLE THE NATION'S RESOURCES BE PUT TO GOOD USE. — BERNAMA MORE  
1409/82

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ABOUT 430 COMMUNITY LEADERS, COMPRISING CHAIRMEN AND SECRETARIES OF 26 COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCILS AND CHAIRMEN, SECRETARIES AND TREASURERS OF 120 DISTRICT COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEES IN THE COUNTRY ARE ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE.

MEANWHILE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL UNITY BOARD, TUN V.T. SAMBANTHAN, IN HIS SPEECH SAID THAT THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMME NOW COVERED 26 TOWNS AND THE NUMBER WAS EXPECTED TO BE INCREASED TO 41 BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

IN THE FUTURE, THE BOARD PLANNED TO SET UP 11 COUNCILS EACH YEAR UNTIL IT COVERED ALL THE TOWNS IN THE COUNTRY. SO FAR ABOUT 11,000 ARE INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEES.

TUN SAMBANTHAN SAID THAT PROBLEMS SUCH AS USE OF COMMUNITY HALLS, BALAIRAYAS AND ASSOCIATION BUILDINGS WERE STILL BEING FACED, IN CARRYING OUT ITS ACTIVITIES.

EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS GIVEN A TRADITIONAL AND CEREMONIAL WELCOME ON ARRIVAL AT THE DEWAN SRI PINANG.

THREE GROUPS OF TRADITIONAL MALAY, INDIAN AND CHINESE MUSICIANS AS WELL AS GIRLS IN TRADITIONAL COSTUMES, ESCORTED DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY CHIEF MINISTER DR. LIM CHONG EU AND TUN SAMBANTHAN INTO THE HALL. — BERNAMA