

ND26 (F)
MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, JAN. 20 (BERNAMA) — (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CALLED FOR A REVIVALISATION OF MALAYSIAN ARCHITECTURE, AND SAID THAT ALL TOWNS IN THE COUNTRY SHOULD REFLECT THE NATIONAL IDENTITY.

AS IT WAS, HE ADDED, EVEN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL DID NOT HAVE ITS OWN CHARACTER AND WAS MERELY A +FAIR COPY+ OF WESTERN CITIES. THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, WHO WAS OPENING THE SEMINAR +TOWARDS A MALAYSIAN IDENTITY IN ARCHITECTURE+ HERE, WANTED ALL PARTIES CONCERNED TO FIND WAYS OF INCORPORATING THE NATION'S ART AND CULTURE IN THE DESIGNS OF BUILDINGS.

HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NOT MUCH EVIDENCE OF THE HIGH QUALITY OF MALAY ARCHITECTURE LEFT BECAUSE THE MATERIAL USED WAS WOOD.

THERE WAS ALSO NO EFFORT MADE DURING BRITISH RULE TO PROMOTE LOCAL ARCHITECTURE. INSTEAD, WIDESPREAD COPYING WAS ENCOURAGED SO MUCH SO THE BUILDINGS IN THIS COUNTRY WERE BAD IMITATIONS OF THOSE IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

—BERNAMA MORE 1425/BY

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REGRETTED THAT +INDEPENDENCE HAS NOT FREED LOCAL ARCHITECTS FROM THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN ART AND CULTURE+.

+THEY STILL STUDY IN THE WEST AND EVEN WHEN THEY ARE TRAINED IN MALAYSIA THEY LEARN FROM TEACHERS WHOSE ACADEMIC BACKGROUND IS WESTERN+, HE SAID.

THE BUILDINGS THEY DESIGNED WERE MORE OR LESS THE SAME: TOWER BLOCKS WITH TIERED PODIUMS THAT +RESEMBLE MATCH BOXES+.

SOME FEATURES SO POPULAR NOW WERE NOT ONLY ALIEN BUT ALSO NOT FUNCTIONAL.

THE FLAT ROOF, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS NOT SUITABLE IN A COUNTRY LIKE MALAYSIA WHICH EXPERIENCED HEAVY RAIN, HE ADDED. —BERNAMA MORE 1429/BY

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HE URGED LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED TO ENSURE THAT +CONCRETE JUNGLES+ DID NOT RISE IN THIS COUNTRY.

HE SAID THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD CONSIDER IMPOSING REGULATIONS ON LANDSCAPING, INCLUDING

HOLDING HOUSE OWNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR COMPOUNDS +RIGHT UP TO THE EDGE OF THE MAIN ROAD+.

SUCH REGULATIONS WERE NECESSARY BECAUSE MALAYSIANS WERE NOT VERY CIVIC MINDED, HE ADDED. —BERNAMA 1430/BY