

N100 (F)
MAHATHIR-PRESS

EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AFTER 2230 HRS. TODAY OCT. 12:

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT. 12⁸¹ (BERNAMA) -- THE PRESS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE GREATER NEEDS OF THE NATION AND PEOPLE BY THINKING OF WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE AS A WHOLE IN CARRYING OUT ITS FUNCTIONS, PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TONIGHT.

HE SAID THE PRESS HAD DONE WELL SO FAR BUT THERE WAS MUCH MORE TO BE DONE BEFORE ALL THE PEOPLES OF MALAYSIA WERE UNITED WITH ONE SINGLE OBJECTIVE TO BUILD A GREATER MALAYSIA, WHERE PEACE AND PROSPERITY AND THE FREEDOM OF THE RESPONSIBLE WERE ASSURED.

SPEAKING ON THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESS AT A NATIONAL PRESS CLUB DINNER HERE, HE SAID: +IF WE THINK OF OUR COUNTRY AND OUR PEOPLE, THEN THE NARROW INTEREST OF THE PRESS AN AS INSTITUTION FADES INTO INSIGNIFICANCE.

+THE NEEDS OF THE NATION AND THE PEOPLE ARE INFINITELY GREATER+.

HE ADDED THAT MALAYSIA NEEDED A PERIOD OF STABILITY DURING WHICH TO CONSOLIDATE ITS GAINS AND TO BUILD UP THE WORK ETHICS AND VALUES THAT WOULD MAKE IT STRONG AND VIABLE.

—BERNAMA MORE 2110/AN

N101 (F)
MAHATHIR-PRESS 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

+THE GOVERNMENT WILL DO ITS BEST. BUT, THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS THE COOPERATION OF EVERYONE, INCLUDING, OF COURSE, THE PRESS,+ HE SAID.

DEALING WITH FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID IT SHOULD BE EXERCISED WITH RESTRAINT AND RESPONSIBILITY.

WHILE THE PRESS HAD THE RIGHT TO EXPOSE ANY SHORTCOMINGS, WHETHER IN THE GOVERNMENT OR IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IT ALSO HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PRESENT A BALANCED PICTURE.

HE ADDED THAT FAILURE TO MAINTAIN BALANCED REPORTING WOULD RESULT IN THE CREATION OF AN IMAGE OF A COUNTRY THAT DID NOT SEEM TO BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING RIGHT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT IN A MULTI-RACIAL COUNTRY LIKE MALAYSIA, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESS GOES BEYOND JUST ACCURATE REPORTING. 188

HE ADDED: +THE SENSITIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS RACES HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED.

+POLITICAL STABILITY AND THE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AMONG THE RACES ARE TWO IMPORTANTS CONDITIONS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT STRIVES TO PROMOTE AND PRESERVE.+

—BERNAMA MORE 2117/AN

N101 (F)
MAHATHIR-PRESS 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

+THE GOVERNMENT WILL DO ITS BEST. BUT, THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS THE COOPERATION OF EVERYONE, INCLUDING, OF COURSE, THE PRESS,+ HE SAID.

DEALING WITH FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID IT SHOULD BE EXERCISED WITH RESTRAINT AND RESPONSIBILITY.

WHILE THE PRESS HAD THE RIGHT TO EXPOSE ANY SHORTCOMINGS, WHETHER IN THE GOVERNMENT OR IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IT ALSO HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PRESENT A BALANCED PICTURE.

HE ADDED THAT FAILURE TO MAINTAIN BALANCED REPORTING WOULD RESULT IN THE CREATION OF AN IMAGE OF A COUNTRY THAT DID NOT SEEM TO BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING RIGHT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT IN A MULTI-RACIAL COUNTRY LIKE MALAYSIA, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESS GOES BEYOND JUST ACCURATE REPORTING.

HE ADDED: +THE SENSITIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS RACES HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED.

+POLITICAL STABILITY AND THE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AMONG THE RACES ARE TWO IMPORTANT CONDITIONS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT STRIVES TO PROMOTE AND PRESERVE.+

—BERNAMA MORE 2117/AN

N102 (F)
MAHATHIR-PRESS 3 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

HE SAID THAT IN ALL ITS ACTION AND POLICIES THE GOVERNMENT TOOK SPECIAL CARE THAT THOSE TWO FACTORS WERE ALWAYS TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

IT WOULD BE INIMICAL TO THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS IF THE PRESS, IN THEIR OVER-ZEALOUSNESS, WERE TO REPORT EVENTS WITHOUT GIVING DUE CONSIDERATION TO THE SENSITIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS RACES.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID SOME MEMBERS OF THE PRESS REGARDED THE NEED TO EXERCISE CERTAIN RESTRAINT IN ORDER NOT TO RUFFLE SUCH SENSITIVITIES AS A LIMITATION TO THE PROPER AND EFFECTIVE WORKING OF THE MEDIA.

+I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THESE CONSTRAINTS SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A CHALLENGE TO THE SKILL AND MATURITY OF OUR JOURNALISTS, BROADCASTERS AND OTHERS IN THE MEDIA AND ALSO AS A TEST TO THEIR SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY,+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ABSOLUTE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS EXISTED ANYWHERE AS THERE WAS ALWAYS SOME RESTRAINTS EXERCISED, IF NOT BY THE GOVERNMENT, AT LEAST, BY THE OWNERS, ADVERTISERS, EMPLOYEES AND OTHERS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE PRESS IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY WAS TO EDUCATE AND INFORM THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES SO AS TO ENABLE THEM TO MAKE THEIR CHOICE.

—BERNAMA MORE 2135/AN

N103 (F)
MAHATHIR-PRESS 4 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

+THE BETTER INFORMED THE PUBLIC IS ON ALL ISSUES THE BETTER ARE THEY ABLE TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS AS TO WHICH PARTY SHOULD FORM THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE ADDED.

HE WAS HAPPY TO SEE THAT THE PRESS IN THE COUNTRY HAD DISCHARGED THIS IMPORTANT FUNCTION ADMIRABLY.

—BERNAMA 2137/AN