

MAHATHIR - EXCO  
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BY AHMAT WAHAB

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KOTA BHARU, FEB. 22 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, TODAY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE FOR STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS TO UNDERSTAND THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES, PARTICULARLY THE BACKGROUND TO DECISIONS.

A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLICIES COULD RESULT IN MANY GOVERNMENT DECISIONS BEING WRONGLY INTERPRETED, HE ADDED WHEN SPEAKING AT A BRIEFING ON THE DEVELOPMENT IN KELANTAN GIVEN BY THE MENTRI BESAR, DATUK HAJI MOHD. YAACOB, AT THE STATE OPERATIONS ROOM HERE.

HE SAID THAT SUCH WRONG INTERPRETATIONS ALSO OCCURRED AMONG GOVERNMENT OFFICERS.

AS AN EXAMPLE, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR CITED THE GOVERNMENT'S DIRECTIVE THAT ALL TOWNS SHOULD BE KEPT CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE DECISION WAS WRONGLY INTERPRETED BY THE IMPLEMENTORS AS INCLUDING LUXURIOUS PROJECTS SUCH AS SWIMMING POOLS AND STADIUMS, COSTING THOUSANDS OF RINGGIT, HE SAID.

HE ADDED: IN FACT, THE DECISION IS ONLY FOR TOWNS TO BE KEPT CLEAN BY CLEARING RUBBISH AND IMPROVING ITS BEAUTY BY PLANTING TREES. -- BERNAMA MORE 1857/MK

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT TO AVOID THIS SITUATION, STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS MUST TRULY UNDERSTAND THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND ALL ITS DECISIONS AS WELL AS ALL ITS ADMINISTRATIVE WORKINGS.

IN ADDITION, THEY MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND WHAT THEIR POWERS WERE, THOSE OF GOVERNMENT OFFICERS AS WELL AS THE POWERS OF THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS, HE ADDED.

THE AIM OF THE GOVERNMENT IN APPOINTING STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS FULL TIME, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR EXPLAINED, WAS NOT MERELY TO GIVE THEM A HIGHER STATUS BUT FOR THEM TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN ENSURING SUCCESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION.

THIS, HE SAID, DID NOT MEAN THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICERS COULD NOT IMPLEMENT THE PROJECTS BUT TO ENSURE THAT ALL PROJECTS PROGRESS D SMOOTHLY AND DID NOT STRAY FROM THE GOVERNMENT POLICY.

HE SUGGESTED THAT STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS VISIT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO SEE THE PROGRESS FOR THEMSELVES AND TO DIENTIFY ANY PROBLEMS BEING FACED. -- BERNAMA MORE 1900/MK

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HE REGRETTED THAT MANY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED AND THIS NOT ONLY CAUSED A LOSS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE BUT ALSO RESULTED IN INCREASED COSTS WHEN THEY WERE EVENTUALLY IMPLEMENTED.

WHAT WAS MORE IMPORTANT WAS THAT SUCH DELAYS COULD AFFECT THE PEOPLE'S CREDULITY IN THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO FULFILL ITS PROMISES TO BRING DEVELOPMENT, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT MAJOR PROJECTS NEED NOT BE GIVEN TO CONSULTANTS FOR STUDY AND DESIGN BUT COULD BE OFFERED AS TURNKEY PROJECTS TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION ON TIME AND EVEN EARLIER THAN SCHEDULED.

THE EXPERIENCE IN MALAYSIA, HE ADDED, SHOWEED THAT PROJECTS WHICH WERE STUDIED AN DESIGNED BY CONSULTANTS WERE NOT SUITED TO LOCAL CONDITIONS.

HE SAID THAT IT WAS BETTER TO OFFER THE PROJECTS TO CONTRACTORS UNDER A +TURNKEY+ CONTRACT AS THEY WERE THE PEOPLE WHO WOULD IMPLEMENT THEM.

HE ADDED THAT CONSULTANTS COULD CONTINUE TO BE USED BUT ONLY TO ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION WAS CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO THE PLANS.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE BRIEFING WERE FINANCE MINISTER, TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH, TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER, TENGKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN AND STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS. -- BERNAMA 1925/MK