

MAHATHIR - MEETING

BM

MELAKA, DEC. 18 (BERNAMA) ⁸² ^P DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, CALLED ON WRITERS TODAY TO HARNESS THEIR TALENT TO EVOLVING A DYNAMIC MALAY WORLD-VIEW.

THE PRIME MINISTER URGED WRITERS TO USE THEIR CRAFT AND CREATIVITY TOWARDS THIS END TO REDEEM THE PRIDE OF THE MALAYS AS AN HONOURABLE RACE WITH THE CAPABILITY TO PROGRESS IN ALL ENDEAVOURS.

+THIS SHOULD BECOME THE GUIDING PHILOSOPHY OF OUR WORLD-VIEW,+ HE ADDED.

+WE SHOULD FREE OURSELVES OF THE KATAK DIBAWAH TEMPURONG (FROG UNDER THE COCONUT SHELL) MENTALITY.

+WE MUST STEP FIRMLY ON THE GROUND OF THE REAL WORLD AND SEEK OUR HONOUR AND STATION IN LIFE AMONG THE CHALLENGES THERE.+

OPENING THE MEETING OF THE MALAY WORLD '82 AT DURIAN DAUN HERE, THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT AFTER GETTING INDEPENDENCE, +WE NEED TO SHAKE OFF ALL FORMS OF INFLUENCES THAT CAN WEAKEN US.+

--MORE 1309/HM

MAHATHIR - MEETING 2 MELAKA

'WE NEED TO RESUSCITATE OUR MALAY VALUES AND IDENTITY WHICH HAVE THEIR OWN DYNAMISM.'

HE SAID WRITERS MUST HAVE THE MOTIVATION TO REVIVE AND NURTURE HONOURABLE VALUES AMONG THE MALAY RACE.

THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS, WHETHER IN THE FORM OF HISTORICAL WRITINGS, POETRY, NOVELS, SHORT STORIES OR RESEARCH FINDINGS, SHOULD HAVE THE ULTIMATE AIM OF MOBILISING THE NEW MALAY WORLD ORDER TO BRING PROGRESS TO ANY CORNER OF THE REGION INHABITED BY THE MALAY RACE.

HE SAID THE MALAY WORLD HAD A PROUD HISTORY BEFORE THE COMING OF FOREIGN POWERS TO THE REGION AND THEIR DIVISIVE EFFECT ON THE MALAYS.

THE MALAY WORLD OF HISTORICAL TIMES WAS AN IMPORTANT CENTRE OF CIVILISATION AND COMMERCE.

THE ARRIVAL OF WESTERN POWERS HAD NOT ONLY PUT AN END TO THIS GLITTERING ERA BUT ALSO CORRUPTED THE MALAY WORLD-VIEW UNTIL IT BECAME ONLY A REFLECTION OF THE VIEW OF THE COLONIALISTS. -- MORE

1355/MB

2020
ZCZC NO42 (F)

MAHATHIR - MEETING 3 MELAKA

'NO ONLY WERE WE SUBJUGATED POLITICALLY AND RAVISHED ECONOMICALLY, OUR VALUES AND THINKING WERE ALSO PERVERTED BY THEIR VIEWS AND VALUES, RESULTING IN THE MALAY WORLD NEARLY LOSING ITS IDENTITY AND EXISTENCE IN HISTORY.'

THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT WHILE HISTORY COULD NOT BE CHANGED, SITUATIONS COULD.

IT WAS THE OBLIGATION OF MALAYS TO CHERISH AND SAFEGUARD THE HERITAGE OF THE MALAYS AS DESCENDENTS OF A PROGRESSIVE AND CIVILISED COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD.

IN THIS CONNECTION, LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL PROPONENTS WERE ASSIGNED AN EXTREMELY CHALLENGING TASK WHICH MUST BE DISCHARGED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXISTING GEO-POLITICAL STRUCTURE.

HE SAID THE DECLINE OF THE MALAY WORLD WAS NOT BECAUSE OF LACK OF SPIRIT OR COURAGE OF THE MALAYS OF THOSE TIMES BUT BECAUSE THE THREAT CAME FROM A PEOPLE WHO WERE MORE ADVANCED IN KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY. -- MORE 1400/MB

MAHATHIR - MEETING 4 MELAKA

VARIOUS DECEITS WERE PRACTISED ON THE MALAYS AND THE SEEDS OF DISUNITY SOWN AMONG THEM.

'THE FOREIGNERS, THROUGH A VERY SUBTLE PROCESS, TOOK CONTROL OF OUR THINKING AND CAUSED US TO HAVE A LOW REGARD OF OUR WORTH AND OUR QUALITIES,' HE SAID.

THE COLONIAL POWERS ENCOURAGED THE MALAYS TO FOCUS THEIR THINKING CULTURE, SO THAT THE MINDS OF THE MALAYS WOULD BE CAUGHT UP IN ISSUES CULTURE, CUSTOMS AND HISTORY AND STEERED AWAY FROM QUESTIONS OF KNOWLEDGE, ECONOMICS AND POLITICS TO ENSURE THEY REMAINED WEAK.

'WE WERE ALSO FED WITH THEIR OWN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUES SO THAT WE WOULD LOSE OUR IDENTITY AND LOOK UP TO THE COLONIALISTS.'

SPEAKING OF THE MALAY WORLD IN A MORE SPECIFIC CONTEXT, THAT IS, IN THE CONTEXT OF MALAYSIA, HE SAID DISCUSSIONS ON CULTURE SHOULD IDEALLY BE FREE OF ALL POLITICAL PREJUDICES BECAUSE CULTURE WAS THE PRACTICAL MANIFESTATION OF THE THINKING AND SYSTEM OF VALUES OF A COMMUNITY. -- MORE 1515/MB

MAHATHIR - MEETING 5 MELAKA

HE ADMITTED HOWEVER THAT THIS MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE IN TODAY'S SITUATION WHERE THE QUESTION OF CULTURE WAS OFTEN COMPLICATED BY DIFFICULT AND SENSITIVE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

THIS SITUATION WAS CLEARLY MANIFEST IN THE POLITICAL CHESS GAMES OF NEWLY-EMERGENT NATIONS, HE ADDED.

IN MALAYSIA, HE SAID THE EVOLUTION OF A NATIONAL CULTURE HAD A DIRECT ASSOCIATION WITH THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL UNITY AND THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL IDENTITY BASED ON THE WAY OF LIFE OF A PEOPLE OF DIFFERING RACE, RELIGION AND CULTURE.

THE FOUNDATION HAD BEEN LAID WHEN THE COUNTRY ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE AND THE PROBLEM NOW WAS ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE IDEA OF A NATIONAL CULTURE FOUNDED ON THE CULTURE OF THE ORIGINAL PEOPLE OF THE REGION AND CONTAINING ELEMENTS ASSIMILATED FROM OTHER CULTURES AND OF ISLAM AS THE KEY ELEMENT WAS NOT SOMETHING NEW. -- MORE 1518/MB

MAHATHIR - MEETING 6 MELAKA

SUCH A SITUATION HAD EXISTED THE PAST HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BEING THAT IN THE PAST, THE PROCESS WAS NOT REGULATED OR PLANNED, RESULTING IN ABSORPTION OF DAMAGING ELEMENTS THAT HAMPERED THE EVOLUTION OF A NATIONAL CULTURE THAT COULD BRING ABOUT A TRULY STRONG AND LOYAL MALAYSIAN NATION.

THE PRIME MINISTER POINTED OUT THAT WHEN THE COUNTRY WAS PREPARING FOR INDEPENDENCE, THE PEOPLE AGREED THAT NATIONAL UNITY BE BUILT THROUGH THE UNIFYING PROCESS OF HAVING ONE LANGUAGE, THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE, AND ONE CULTURE, THE NATIONAL CULTURE WHICH WAS BASED ON THE CULTURE OF THE ORIGINAL PEOPLE OF THE LAND.

IN THIS LIGHT, THE NATIONAL CULTURE AND NATIONAL LANGUAGE SHOULD NOT BE MADE ISSUES AT ALL, AND QUESTIONS ON THEM SHOULD BE CONFINED ONLY TO DISCUSSIONS ON WAYS OF IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPT.

"IF WE WISH TO HAVE A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS COUNTRY AND A HAPPY NATION, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE SHOULD NOT BE MADE INTO POLITICAL ISSUES TO SERVE THE ENDS OF ANTI-UNITY GROUPS WHOSE LOYALTY TO THE COUNTRY IS QUESTIONABLE. -- MORE 1528/MB

ZCZC N056 (F)

MAHATHIR - MEETING 7 MELAKA

THE MEETING OF THE MALAY WORLD '82 IS ATTENDED BY ABOUT 300 PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS FROM THE ASEAN COUNTRIES, BRUNEI AND SRI LANKA.

IT WILL DISCUSS 14 WORKING PAPERS ON MALAY CULTURE OF 25 YEARS AGO AND MALAY LITERATURE IN THE SOUTH-EAST ASIAN REGION.

IT IS ORGANISED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COUNTRY'S 25TH INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS AND 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE FIRST NATIONAL CULTURAL CONGRESS.

PRESENT AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WERE MELAKA CHIEF MINISTER ABDUL RAHIM THAMBY CHIK, STATE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER DATUK ABDUL RAZAK ALIAS, DEWAN BAHASA DAN PUSSTAKA DIRECTOR-GENERAL DATUK HAJI HASSAN AHMAD AND GAPENA (FEDERATION OF NATIONAL WRITERS ASSOCIATIONS) PRESIDENT PROF. DATUK ISMAIL HUSSEIN. -- BERNAMA 1535/MB