

KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 22 (BERNAMA)--PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY IT WAS EASY FOR CONSERVATIONISTS TO CONDEMN THE EXPLOITATION OF FOREST RESOURCES, BUT FOR MALAYSIA THE CHOICE WAS ONE BETWEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THAT OF REMAINING POOR.

"IF THE WORLD WANTS IS TO PRESERVE OUR FORESTS, THEN THE WORLD SHOULD BUY OUR MANUFACTURED GOODS AT LEAST," HE SAID.

HE WAS OPENING THE 12TH PAN-PACIFIC CONGRESS OF REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS, VALUERS AND COUNSELLORS. THE THEME OF THE CONGRESS IS "LAND RESOURCES THE CHALLENGES AHEAD."

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS VERY EASY FOR CONSERVATIONISTS LIVING IN COUNTRIES THAT HAD WAXED RICH ON THE RAPACIOUS EXPLOITATIONS OF THE WORLD'S RESOURCES IN THE PAST, TO CONDEMN THE SYSTEMATIC EXPLOITATION OF THESE FORESTS.

BUT FOR MALAYSIA, WHICH WAS FACED WITH ALL KINDS OF RESTRICTIONS ON THE EXPORT OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, THERE WAS NO CHOICE BUT TO PRESERVE NATURAL WEALTH LIKE FOREST. --MORE 1158/MD

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IN ANY CASE, THE LAND HAD TO BE CLEARED IN ORDER TO GROW RUBBER, PALM OIL OR TO MINE TIN.

THESE ARE THE ONLY THINGS THAT WE CAN SELL," HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE WORLD WOULD NOT PAY MALAYSIA TO PRESERVE ITS FORESTS.

HE SAID A CHOICE HAD TO BE MADE - DEFOREST AND DEVELOP ECONOMICALLY OR REMAIN POOR SO THAT THE RICH COULD GLORIFY IN THE BEAUTY OF THE MALAYSIAN RAIN-FORESTS WITH THEIR MAJESTIC TREES.

LAND AS A NATURAL RESOURCE COULD BE SUBJECTED TO PLANNED EXPLOITATION, BUT SUCH PLANNING COULD NOT BE TOO IDEALISTIC. OTHER FACTORS MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION, HE ADDED.

HE SAID THAT IF THE WORLD FELT SO STRONGLY ABOUT THE EXPLOITATION OF THE FORESTS, THEN THE COST MUST BE BORNE BY THE WORLD.

HOWEVER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ASSURED THE DELEGATES THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF THE EFFECTS OF UNRESTRICTED DEVELOPMENT AND HAD TAKEN MEASURES TO PREVENT SUCH EXPLOITATION. --MORE 1213/MD  
ZCZC N023 (F/S)

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID LAND USE HAD TO BE JUDICIOUSLY PLANNED, AS THE MISTAKES COULD BE COSTLY.

HE CITED KUALA LUMPUR AS AN EXAMPLE OF A MISTAKE IN LAND USE.

HE SAID THE KELANG VALLEY, IN WHICH KUALA LUMPUR IS SITUATED, WAS STILL RICH IN TIN BUT THIS RESOURCE HAD TO BE FOREGONE BECAUSE BY THE TIME THE PEOPLE BECAME SOPHISTICATED ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT PROPER LAND USE, KUALA LUMPUR HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AS THE FEDERAL CAPITAL AND BECAME A BIG CITY.

IT WOULD CERTAINLY COST THE NATION MUCH MORE TO MOVE THE CAPITAL THAN THE VALUE OF THE TIN RECOVERABLE, HE SAID.

THE MISTAKE WAS MADE BY THE FOUNDERS AND THE SETTLERS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID. --BERNAMA 1228/MD