

MAHATHIR - LANGUAGE

BM

EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AT 9.30 P.M. TODAY (NOV.17)

85 0
KUALA LUMPUR, NOV. 17 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMMAD SAID TONIGHT THAT THE COUNTRY'S EDUCATION SYSTEM HAD PROVISIONS THAT ENABLED THE VARIOUS RACES TO LEARN THEIR MOTHER TONGUES.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT MALAYSIA, AS AN INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN COUNTRY, HAD ITS OWN NATIONAL LANGUAGE - BAHASA MALAYSIA, AS A SYMBOL OF AND INSTRUMENT FOR ACHIEVING UNITY.

LAUNCHING A SPEECH AND WRITING COMPETITION IN BAHASA MALAYSIA FOR THE ALL-MALAYSIA NATIONAL-TYPE CHINESE PRIMARY SCHOOL'S UNITY CUP, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THIS WAS AN ACCEPTED FACT.

HE SAID AFTER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY, THE PRESENT GENERATION FROM THE VARIOUS RACES HAD MASTERED BAHASA MALAYSIA.

HE WAS PROUD TO SEE MANY NON-MALAYS CONVERSING FLUENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY IN THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE; AN SOME WERE EVEN BETTER THAN THE MALAYS THEMSELVES. -- MORE 2126/SA

MAHATHIR - LANGUAGE - 2 - KUALA LUMPUR

HE REMINDED THE MALAYS TO ENHANCE THEIR MASTERY OF THE LANGUAGE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT SOME NON-MALAY STUDENTS WHO CAME FROM THE NATIONAL-TYPE PRIMARY SCHOOL MIGHT FACE PROBLEMS BECAUSE THE TEACHING OF BAHASA MALAYSIA IN THOSE SCHOOL WERE NOT GIVEN AMPLE ATTENTION.

ALTHOUGH THIS MIGHT ENABLE THEM TO LEARN THEIR MOTHER TONGUES BETTER THEY SHOULD NOT NEGLECT THE STUDY OF BAHASA MALAYSIA.

+BAHASA MALAYSIA SHOULD NOT BE LINKED TO RACIAL SENTIMENTS BECAUSE MODERN MALYSIANS SHOULD NOT ONLY MASTER BAHASA MALAYSIA BUT ALSO, IF OTHER LANGUAGES IF POSSIBLE,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WANTED MALAYSIANS TO BE FLUENT IN ENGLISH AS WELL, AND ALSO LEARN OTHER LANGUAGES SUCH AS ARABIC, FRENCH, JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN. -- MORE 2134/SA

NNNN

ZCZC N175

MAHATHIR - LANGUAGE - 3 - KUALA LUMPUR

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO URGED MALAYSIANS TO HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS ISSUES TO DEVELOP A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR NATION BUILDING, SO THAT THE COUNTRY COULD TAKE ITS PROPER PLACE AMONG THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS.

HE SAID THE PRESENT MALAYSIAN GENERATION SHOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO ALL KIND OF KNOWLEDGE AND SCIENCES.

+IF WE ARE TOO BUSY WITH OUR SENTIMENTS WE WILL BE RICH IN SENTIMENT BUT POOR IN KNOWLEDGE, AND IN THE LONG RUN WE WILL BE THE LOSERS+, HE SAID.

TOUCHING ON SECURITY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IN A COUNTRY LIKE MALAYSIA, WITH ITS MULTI-RACIAL POPULATION THIS WAS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY HAD NEVER EXPERIENCE REAL CHAOS, BECAUSE ONLY THOSE WHO HAD SUFFERED AND LOST THEIR PEACE COULD REALLY APPRECIATE THE VALUE OF SECURITY AND PEACE.

HE SAID MALAYSIAN HAD NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE BUT TO LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE. -- BERNAMA 2140/SA