

MAHATHIR-CULTURE

83 P  
KUALA LUMPUR, DEC. 12 (BERNAMA)-- CULTURE SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT AS A SOCIETY IS TRULY THE RESULT OR THE PRODUCT OF ITS CULTURE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER REGRETTED THAT THE TENDENCY HAD ALWAYS BEEN TO FORGET CULTURE ENTIRELY WHEN DEALING WITH TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT.

THIS HAD RESULTED IN THE IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY AND CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH DISAPPOINTED MANY DEVELOPING NATIONS, HE SAID WHEN OPENING AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON TECHNOLOGY, CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA.

HE SAID THAT BEFORE TECHNOLOGY COULD BE SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFERRED OR WHILE IT WAS BEING TRANSFERRED, THE CULTURAL RESISTANCE HAD TO BE OVERCOME.

THIS COULD ONLY BE DONE IF THERE WAS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CULTURE OF THE TRANSFEREE COMMUNITY, OR BETTER STILL THE DIFFERENCES OF THE CULTURES OF THE TRANSFERORS AND THE TRANSFEREES.

+IF THERE IS THIS UNDERSTANDING AND THE RIGHT ALLOWANCES OR PREPARATIONS MADE, THE TRANSFEREE COMMUNITY, OR BETTER STILL THE DIFFERENCES OF THE CULTURES OF THE TRANSFERORS AND THE TRANSFEREES.

+IF THERE IS THIS UNDERSTANDING AND THE RIGHT ALLOWANCES OR PREPARATIONS MADE, THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY WILL SUCCEED..IF CULTURE IS IGNORED, THERE WILL BE RESISTANCE AND FAILURE OR INSIGNIFICANT SUCCESS AT BEST,+ HE ADDED. --MORE 1518/MD

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THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO CAUTIONED THAT THE INTERPLAY OF TECHNOLOGY, CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT WHILE IT COULD BE COMPLIMENTARY, COULD ALSO TEAR A SOCIETY APART IF NOT FULLY APPRECIATED, INTEGRATED AND GUIDED.

+HITHERTO, THERE HAS BEEN MUCH TALK ON THE NEED FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND THE ROLE OF TRANSFEROR .. THE RECEPTIVITY AND CAPACITY OF THE TRANSFEREE HAS NOT RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION.+

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID TODAY'S SO-CALED THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WERE STRIVING TO ACHIEVE MATERIAL PROGRESS BY WHOLESAL IMPORTATION OF A VARIETY OF TECHNOLOGIES FROM ADVANCED COUNTRIES.

HOWEVER, ANALOGOUS TO THE PROCESS OF THE LIFE SCIENCES, TECHNOLOGY COULD NOT ALWAYS BE TRANSFERRED WITHOUT CONSIDERABLE ADAPTATION.

HE SAID THAT RECEIVING COUNTRY HAD TO MEET ONE VITAL PREREQUISITE: TRAINED MANPOWER, BEFORE IT COULD SUCCESSFULLY ABSORB AN IMPORTED TECHNOLOGY.

+THIS PRINCIPLE SEEMS TO BE COMMONSENSE, YET IT IS OFTEN FORGOTTEN IN THE SURGE OF NATIONAL PRIDE AND PERSONAL GREED--THAT LEAD TO EXCESSIVE ABSORPTION OF FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY.+

THE RESULTS HAD NOT BEEN ENTIRELY TO THE GOOD OF THE RECIPIENT SOCIETIES. --MORE 1528/MD

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STRESSING THAT THE ABSORPTION OF FOREIGN TECHNOLOGIES IMPLIED AND INVOLVED CULTURAL CHANGES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IF THE CULTURAL CHANGES WERE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE EXISTING CULTURE, THEN DISORIENTATION AND CONFUSION WOULD RESULT.

+NEEDLESS TO SAY, A DISORIENTED AND CONFUSED SOCIETY IS NOT THE KIND OF SOCIETY THAT IS DESIRABLE.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT MAN DID NOT LIVE BY MATERIAL GAINS ALONE BUT ALSO REQUIRED SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT IN ADDITION TO THE MATERIAL NECESSITIES IN ORDER TO ENJOY A DECENT EXISTENCE.

HE SAID THE VALUE SYSTEM ASPECT OF CULTURE WAS INFLUENCED BY ITS ENVIRONMENT BUT THE ENVIRONMENT COULD BE SHOWN TO AFFECT DIFFERENT SOCIETIES DIFFERENTLY.

+THUS CONTINUOUS HARDSHIP MAY EITHER REDUCE A SOCIETY TO PASSIVE FATALITY OR IT MAY INDUCE A HARDINESS WHICH ENABLES THE SOCIETY TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES OF LIFE.+

ASSUMING THAT THE ENVIRONMENT HAD PRODUCED PASSIVITY AND A FATALIST PHILOSOPHY, HE SAID THE VALUE SYSTEM WOULD BE SUCH THAT INNOVATION AND INVENTIVENESS WOULD BE UNCOMMON.

+INDEED LETHARGY NORMALLY DEVELOPS...THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ADVERSITY WILL NOT CHARACTERISE THAT SOCIETY.

+IN THE REALLY BAD CASSES, THE SOCIETY IS GIVEN TO EXTREME SELF-PITY AND DEPENDENCE ON OTHERS.+ --MORE 1545/MD

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS OF THE VIEW THAT SELF PITY AND DEPENDENCE ON OTHERS WERE CHARACTERISTICS OF MANY UNDER-DEVELOPED OR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

SUCH COUNTRIES ESUALLY LACKED IN DISCIPLINE AND THE WILL TO FIGHT ADVERTISY, HE SAID.

THE VALUE SYSTEM AND CULTURE OF THE SOCIETY IN THESE COUNTRIES WERE INFLUENCED BY THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY OF DEPENDENCE AND PASSIVITY.

+THERE IS NO REACHING OUT FOR KNOWLEDGE AND ADVANCEMENT. RATHER, THERE IS A CONTINUOUS CLAMOUR TO BE GIVEN EVERYTHING IN THE READY TO USE STATE.+

AS SUCH, THE PRIME MINISTER FELT THAT FOR SUCH A SOCIETY, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER POSSIBLE OR AT LEAST WAS NOT EASY TO ACHIEVE.

THE ATTITUDE MILITATES AGAINST IT BECAUSE THE ACCEPTANCE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED A CERTAIN DEGREE OF DISCIPLINE AND DESIRE FOR CHANGE AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT.-- MORE 1545/OM

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+BASICALLY A TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY IS LIKE THE ACCEPTANCE OF A FISHING ROD IN ORDER TO GET FOOD INSTEAD OF GETTING THE FOOD ITSELF WHEN THAT IS WHAT IS ASKED FOR.

+FEW WOULD HAVE THE PATIENCE TO GO FISHING WHEN HUNGRY,+ HE SAID. SIMILARLY, HE ADDED THE PASSIVE SOCIETY WOULD NOT WANT TO LEARN TO MAKE AN ELECTRIC FAN WHEN IT WAS NOT AS IT WAS EASIER TO BUY OR BE GIVEN AN ELECTRIC FAN.

THE PRIME MINISTER DESCRIBED THIS AS A SIMPLISTIC ANALOGY OF THE CULTURAL RESISTANCE INVOLVED IN THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY BUT NEVERTHELESS IT WAS AN APT ANALOGY.-- BERNAMA 1550/OM