

LEAD MAHATHIR

8X
KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 29 (BERNAMA) -- (DITUK SERL DR. MAHATHIR TODAY OUTLINED SEVERAL NEW APPROACHES AND DIRECTIONS THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO TAKE TO INCREASE THE NATION'S WEALTH AND-ENSURE- ITS EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

HE SAID THE NEW APPROACHES AND DIRECTIONS FORMULATED FROM THE EXPERIENCE GAINED FROM THE FURRENT ECONOMIC RECESSION WOULD INCREASE THE NATION'S ABILITY TO FACE THE CHALLENGES AHEAD.
THE MOVES INCLUDE:

- +AVOIDING THE PRACTICE OF GIVING DOLE TO THE PEOPLE,
 - +THE PROMOTION OF COLLECTIVE FARMING,
 - +GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT FOR INCREASED SAVINGS? INVESTMENTS AND PRODUCTIVITY,
 - +REDUCING THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN THE GROWTH OF THE ECONOMY TO PAVE THE WAY FOR A GREATER PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT,
 - +EMBARKING ON A MORE COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND
 - +INCREASING THE NATION'S POPULATION TO 70 MILLION ULTIMATELY,
- MORE 191/RAS

LEAD-MAHATHIR 2 K U A L A L U M P U R

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS TABLING THE REPORT ON THE MID-TERM REVIEW -- OF THE FOURTH MALAYSIA PLAN IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT HERE.

HIS ONE-HOUR SPEECH WAS CARRIED LIVE BY RTM.

HE SAID THAT THE PRACTICE OF GIVING DOLE WHICH HAD BECOME COMMON AMONG MANY WESTERN NATIONS MUST BE AVOIDED AS A MEASURE TO ERADICATE POVERTY.

THIS WAS BECAUSE THE PRACTICE HAD WEAKENED THE ECONOMY OF A NUMBER OF WESTERN NATIONS TO THE EXTENT, THAT THEY COULD NO LONGER COMPETE WITH OTHER DEVELOPED OR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

HE SAID SUCH A PRACTICE WAS FOUND TO HAVE REDUCED THE INCENTIVE TO WORK AS THE PEOPLE'S INCOME WAS GUARANTEED REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY WERE EMPLOYED OR OTHERWISE.

DATUKERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD, IN ITS EFFORTS TO ERADICATE POVERTY, RELY MORE ON IMPARTING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES THAT WOULD ENABLE THE PEOPLE TO EARN INCOME THROUGH THEIR OWN EFFORTS.

HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

HE SAID THAT THE FRUITS OF SUCH EFFORTS COULD ALREADY BE SEEN IN FELDA SCHEMES WHERE LANDLESS PEOPLE HAD BECOME SETTLERS. -- MORE

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE PROCESS OF DISTRIBUTING WEALTH DID NOT END BY SUCH EFFORTS ALONE. TO ENSURE THAT MALAYSIANS BENEFITTED FROM THE NATION'S WEALTH, THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR HAD BOUGHT OVER SEVERAL INDUSTRIES OWNED BY FOREIGN INTERESTS.

THIS INCLUDED THE TAKING OVER OF SOME GIANT CORPORATIONS INVOLVED IN MINING, PLANTATIONS, FINANCE AND OTHER SECTORS BY THE NATIONAL EQUITY CORPORATION (PNB).

HE SAID IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION THAT THE OWNERSHIP OF PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANIES BE SHARED BY AS MANY CITIZENS AS POSSIBLE.

ON GROUP FARMING, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD UNDERTAKEN AN IND" 1 STUDY ON THIS. IT FELT THAT IN THIS MODERN TIMES, THE PEOPLE COULD NO LONGER ACCEPT A PEASANTRY SYSTEM IN WHICH FARMERS TRIED TO EKE OUT A LIVING THROUGH THE OWNERSHIP OF WORKING ON SHALL PLOTS OF LAND.

NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF AID WAS GIVEN, OUTPUT FROM THE SHALL PLOT WOULD BE INADEQUATE TO SUSTAIN THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

BEARING THIS IN MIND, IT WAS FELT THAT THE NATION SHOULD STOP PADI CULTIVATION AND INSTEAD IMPORT CHEAPER RICE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. -- MORE 1955/MB

ZCZC N200(F/S)
LEAD-MAHATHIR 4 KUALA LUMPUR

HOWEVER, SUCH A MOVE COULD BE RISKY BECAUSE IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY, THE NATION COULD BE LEFT WITHOUT FOOD.

IN COGNIZANCE OF THIS REALITY, THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONVINCED THAT A WISE APPROACH WOULD BE TO BRING MORE BENEFITS TO FARMERS AS WELL AS THE NATION.

HENCE, GROUP FARMING WAS THE ANSWER.

UNDER THIS APPROACH, NEIGHBOURING KAMPUNCS WOULD BE REGROUPED INTO SMALL TOWNSHIPS WHILE PADI FARMERS COULD MERGE THEIR LAND HOLDINGS WITH ADJACENT PLOTS TO FORM ESTATES.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TRAIN MANAGERS FOR THESE ESTATES TO BE RUN ON A COOPERATIVE BASIS WITH LAND OWNERS HAVING SHARES IN THE VENTURE..

THE NEW TOWNSHIP WOULD BE EQUIPPED WITH MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES. -- MORE 2000/MB

LEAD-MAHATHIR 5 KUALA LUMPUR

ON EFFORTS TO INCREASE SAVINGS, INVESTMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY, HE SAID THEY WERE ESSENTIAL BECAUSE THE THE THREE FACTORS WOULD DETERMINE NATIONAL WEALTH.

HE SAID THAT A MAJOR SOURCE OF WEALTH WAS THE AMOUNT OF INCOME SET ASIDE FOR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT. IT WAS THEREFORE, IMPORTANT THAT THIS HABIT BE INCULCATED.

MONEY SAVED IN TURN COULD BE USED FOR INVESTMENT AND WHEN SUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF FUNDS WAS ACCUMULATED, THE NATION COULD SET UP ITS OWN INDUSTRIES OR OTHER BUSINESS VENTURES.

WITH REGARD TO PRODUCTIVITY, HE SAID IT WOULD DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THE NATION COULD COMPETE IN INDUSTRY AND TRADE WITH OTHER NATIONS.

+IF WE SUCCEED, WE WILL INCREASE THE WEALTH OF THE COUNTRY AS WELL AS THE INCOMES OF ALL MALAYSIANS. MALAYSIANS WOULD BE PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE MARKET WITH HIGHER PURCHASING POWER TO BUY THE NECESSITIES AND LUXURY GOODS AND THEREBY EXPANDING THE DOMESTIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, +HE SAID.-- MORE 2010/MB

ZCZC N202 (F/S)
LEAD-MAHATHIR 6 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID THAT FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS, THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN THE GROWTH OF THE ECONOMY WOULD BE REDUCED IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT CURRENTLY, GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT WAS SIZEABLE.

FOR THE 1981-83 PERIOD PUBLIC SECTOR EXPENDITURE AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL NATIONAL EXPENDITURE WAS 33.4 PER CENT.

THE REDUCTION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR'S ROLE IN THIS REGARD WOULD ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO REORIENTATE ITS ROLE TO NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

SUCH A MOVE WOULD IN TURN CALL FOR A GREATER PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMY AND A CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID PAST PLANNING WHICH WERE UNDERTAKEN ALONG THE LINES OF STATE BOUNDARIES WOULD BE RESTRUCTURED.

THE EMPHASIS WOULD NOW BE MORE ON A COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

HE SAID SUCH A PLANNING APPROACH WOULD BRING ABOUT OPTIMUM BENEFITS TO EVERY STATE BESIDES REDUCING UNHEALTHY COMPETITION AMONG NEIGHBOURING STATES. -- MORE 2015/MB

LEAD-MAHATHIR 7 KUALA LUMPUR

ON THE MOVE TO INCREASE MALAYSIA'S POPULATION, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE PRESENT POPULATION OF 14 MILLION WAS SMALL IN RELATION TO ITS LAND AREA OF 334,000 SQ KM.

HE SAID BRITAIN, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH A LAND AREA OF 245,000 SQ KM WAS SUPPORTING A POPULATION OF 55 MILLION WHILE THE PHILIPPINES WITH 300,000 SQ. KM, WAS BEING INHIBITED BY 45 MILLION PEOPLE.

HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH A LARGE POPULATION SIZE DID NOT NECESSARILY GUARANTEE PROSPERITY, A SMALL ONE COULD GIVE RISE TO MANY PROBLEMS. THEY INCLUDE A TOO-SMALL DOMESTIC MARKET TO SUPPORT CONSUMPTION INDUSTRY.

IN VIEW OF THIS, THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED THAT MALAYSIA SHOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE A TOTAL POPULATION OF 70 MILLION.

EARLIER, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT WHILE THESE NEW APPROACHES WERE BEING ADOPTED, THE ON-GOING POLICIES SUCH AS THE LOOK EAST POLICY AND THE MALAYSIAN INCORPORATED CONCEPT, WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PURSUED WITH ADDED VIGOUR. -- BERNAMA
2020/MB