

MAHATHIR-GERAKBAKTI  
BM

84 (P)  
KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 1 (BERNAMA) -- POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE COUNTRY CAN BE REDUCED OR COMPLETELY ERADICATED IF THE PEOPLE UTILISED THEIR ABILITIES AND AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES WITHOUT DEPENDING ON OTHERS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT POVERTY WAS STILL EVIDENT AMONG THE PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO WEATHER THE CHALLENGES, LEADING TO THE NATION BEING DEPENDANT ON FOREIGN WORKERS.

+WE OURSELVES ARE NOT PREPARED TO CARRY OUT THE DUTIES AND WE PREFER TO LET OTHERS CARRY THEM OUT. THE ATTITUDE OF DEPENDING ON OTHERS WILL SLOWLY ERODE US OF OUR FREEDOM+, HE LAMENTED WHEN LAUNCHING THE YAYASAN GERAKBAKTI PEMUDA OF UMNO YOUTH AT DEWAN TUNKU CHANSELOK IN UNIVERSITI MALAYA HERE.

THE FOUNDATION WILL AMONG OTHER THINGS BE A PERMANENT FINANCIAL SOURCE FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY.

THE FOUNDATION RAISED IN \$5.2 MILLION AT THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY TODAY, INCLUDING \$1 MILLION FROM PROMET, \$1 MILLION FROM KOMPLEKS KEWANGAN MALAYSIA AND \$560,000 FROM STATE GOVERNMENTS.

--MORE 2122/AN

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THE PRIME MINISTER HANDED OVER A CHECK FOR \$500,000 ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND SABAH CHIEF MINISTER DATUK HARRIS SALLEH DONATED \$500,000 ON BEHALF OF PARTI BERJAYA.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE PEOPLE SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES HOW THEY COULD CONTRIBUTE TO BRING ABOUT A SUCCESSFUL AND PROSPEROUS MALAYSIAN SOCIETY.

+WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES WHY POVERTY IS STILL EXISTENT WHEN WE ALREADY HAVE POLITICAL POWER, THE GOVERNMENT IS SPENDING THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS TO ERADICATE POVERTY AND THE NATION IS BLESSED WITH ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES.

+IF WE ARE REALLY SINCERE, THE SETBACK TO OUR PROSPERITY IS WE OURSELVES. IF WE ARE WILLING TO CHANGE OUR LIFESTYLE, THEN WE SHOULD NOT BE DISTURBED BY POVERTY+, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE PROBLEM OF NOT WANTING TO FACE UP TO THIS HAS BECOME A HISTORY OF THIS NATION.

+THERE ARE NO LAWS WHICH OBSTRUCT IN EFFORTS TO ERADICATE POVERTY EXCEPT WE OURSELVES+, HE ADDED.

--MORE 2127/AN

ZCZC N117 (F/S)

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT WAS DUE TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE MALAYSIAN THEMSELVES THAT HAD RESULTED IN FOREIGNERS COMING TO WORK IN MALAYSIA FOR BETTER SALARIES.

+THIS HAD LED US TO BE ENVIOUS OF THEM AND SOME ARE EVEN SAYING THAT MALAYSIA IS ENCOURAGING FOREIGNERS TO WORK HERE+, HE SAID.

CITING A MALAY PROVERB, THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED: +WHO IS TO BLAME IF THE CHICKEN WHICH IS SURROUNDED BY FOOD DOES NOT WANT TO EAT AND THE DUCK WHICH IS SURROUNDED BY WATER DOES NOT WANT TO DRINK?+

HE HOPED THAT THE POOR PEOPLE WOULD NOT JUST DEPEND ON ASSISTANCE BUT WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING THEIR LIVES.

IF THEY DEPEND ON ASSISTANCE ALONE, THEN THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO REMAIN POOR, HE ADDED.

--BERNAMA 2130/AN