

MAHATHIR-CHANGE

BM

BALAGA (SARAWAK), SEPT. 11 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS EXPRESSED HIS CONVICTION THAT MALAYSIANS COULD BE A SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE WITH A HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING IF THEY ARE WILLING TO CHANGE THEIR WAY OF LIFE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THEY COULD ATTAIN SUCH ACHIEVEMENTS WITHOUT DISCARDING CUSTOMS AND CULTURES INHERITED FROM THEIR FOREFATHERS.

+WE MUST BE WILLING TO CHANGE OUR WAY OF LIFE BUT THIS PROCESS DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE CANNOT RETAIN OUR TRADITIONAL COSTUMES AND CUSTOMS AND CULTURES,+ HE SAID TO ABOUT 600 ORANG ULU PEOPLE WHO ENTERTAINED HIM TO A DINNER AT THE UMA BAWANG LONGHOUSE IN LONG MURUM, WHICH IS A 15-MINUTE HELICOPTER RIDE FROM BELAGA, LAST NIGHT.

THE FOLKS CAME FROM SEVERAL LONGHOUSES AROUND BELAGA TO MEET THE PRIME MINISTER WHO SPENT THE NIGHT AT A 46-COMPARTMENT LONGHOUSE ACCOMMODATING 350 KAYAN TRIBE PEOPLE.

IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S ASPIRATIONS TO CHANGE THE PEOPLE'S WAY OF LIFE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT LONGHOUSES SHOULD BE BUILT WITH COMFORT IN MIND AND PROVIDED WITH FACILITIES OTHER THAN WATER AND ELECTRICITY WHICH WERE ALREADY AVAILABLE. -- MOR -
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MAHATHIR-CHANGE 2 BELAGA

+I AM HAPPY WITH THE OBVIOUS CHANGE IN THE LONGHOUSES WHICH PREVIOUSLY DO NOT HAVE ELECTRICITY AND OTHER FACILITIES.+

+BUT THERE IS NO REASON WHY LONGHOUSES CANNOT BE BUILT IN A MORE CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT WITH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN APPROPRIATE PLACES .+

THE PRIME MINISTER THEN DIRECTED THE MINISTER OF ENERGY, TELECOMS AND POSTS, DATUK LEO MOGGIE, WHO WAS PRESENT, TO GIVE ATTENTION TO THE RESIDENTS' REQUEST THAT TELEVISION TRANSMISSION BE EXTENDED TO THE DISTRICT

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE VISIT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ANNOUNCED AN ALLOCATION OF \$200,000 FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MINOR PROJECTS FOR THE UMA BAWANG LONGHOUSE IN LONG MURUM.

HE ASSURED THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO BRING DEVELOPMENT TO ALL THE PEOPLE BUT THIS COULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT IF THE PEOPLE REFUSED TO ACCEPT CHANGE.

+THE GOVERNMENT CAN MAKE ALLOCATIONS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE BUT THE QUESTION IS, ARE THE PEOPLE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL THE PROGRAMMES CARRIED OUT?+

+IF THE PEOPLE DO NOT WANT CHANGE THEN THEY WILL CERTAINLY NOT ACHIEVE PROGRESS,+ HE ADDED.-- BERNAMA