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MAHATHIR-TRAIN

184 P  
KUALA LUMPUR, DEC 30 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TOOK A RIDE ON A TRAIN TODAY AND GAVE MALAYANRAILWAY (KTM) A PAT ON THE BACK FOR PROVIDING PASSENGERS WITH WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS COMFORT AND A COURTEOUS SERVICE.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS WIFE, DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH, BOARDED THE KUALA LUMPUR-BOUND EKSPRES SINARAN AT BUTTERWORTH AND, ACCORDING TO KTM, IS BELIEVED TO BE THE FIRST MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER TO HAVE MADE A JOURNEY BY TRAIN.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AND DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DA SITI HASMAH ALIGHTED AT IPOH AND CONTINUED THEIR JOURNEY TO KUALA LUMPUR IN A PLANE, BUT NOT BEFORE THE PRIME MINISTER HAD TOLD ACCOMPANYING REPORTERS HOW PLEASED HE WAS WITH KTM'S SERVICE.

+THE SECOND CLASS NOW IS JUST LIKE THE FIRST CLASS OF DAYS LONG AGO, AND THIS SHOWS THAT KTM HAS GONE A LONG WAY COMPARED TO 30 YEARS AGO,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD EARLIER INSPECTED THE SEATING COMPARTMENTS, SLEEPING BERTHS AND TOILETS. HE EVEN WENT TO THE EXTENT OF TALKING TO THE COOKS IN THE BUFFET CAR.

THE PRIME MINISTER HAD ONE COMPLAINT THOUGH -- THE TRAIN WAS SWAYING TOO MUCH.

HE SUGGESTED THAT KTM DO SOMETHING ABOUT IMPROVING THE TRACKS WHICH HE SAID WERE OLD AND CAUSING TRAINS TO SWAY, RESULTING IN PASSENGER DISCOMFORT.

PASSENGERS ON TODAY'S 10-COACH EKSPRES SINARAN, HOWEVER, DID NOT SEEM TO BE BOTHERED AT ALL BY THE SWAYING OF THE TRAIN AS IT WAS A PLEASANT SURPRISE FOR THEM TO SEE THEIR PRIME MINISTER IN THEIR MIDST, TALKING AND SHAKING HANDS WITH THEM BEFORE RETURNING TO HIS OWN SALOON CAR, A 1928 REFURBISHED COACH. -- BERNAMA  
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