

MAHATHIR

184 P
IPOH, DEC 30 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY. CALLED ON MALAYSIANS TO MAKE IT THEIR NEW YEAR RESOLUTION TO COUNT THEIR BLESSINGS AND REFRAIN FROM REGARDING ISSUES FACING THE GOVERNMENT AS +SENSATIONAL CRISES+.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT CERTAIN PEOPLE DID NOT EVEN APPRECIATE THE GOOD LIFE THAT THEY HAD IN THIS COUNTRY BUT INSTEAD CHOSE TO RUN-DOWN THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS ON BOARD THE EKSPRES SINARAN, HE REGRETTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT VERY MUCH APPRECIATED BY THE PEOPLE FOR VARIOUS REASONS? DESPITE IT IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES AND PROVIDING AID WHICH BENEFITED THEM.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR POINTED OUT MALAYSIA WAS LOOKED UPON BY OTHER COUNTRIES AS A MODEL NATION THAT WAS ENJOYING RACIAL HARMONY, POLITICAL STABILITY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT. -- MORE

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+I HAVE TRAVELLED ALL OVER THE WORLD AND I THINK MALAYSIANS - ARE LUCKY THAT THE GOVERNMENT GIVES THEM SO MUCH AS COMPARED TO OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH PROVIDE THEIR CITIZENS WITH VERY LITTLE DEVELOPMENT, + HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AND DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH WERE RECEIVED ON ARRIVAL HERE FROM BUTTERWORTH BY PERAK MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI RAMLI NGAH TALIB, STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, MALAYAN RAILWAY STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ARRIVAL HERE FROM BUTTERWORTH.

THE PRIME MINISTER SHOOK HANDS WITH THEM AND WISHED THEM +HAPPY NEW YEAR*.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AND DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA SERI DR SITI HASMAH LATER LEFT FOR KUALA LUMPUR BY PLANE. -- BERNAMA.

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THE PRIME MINISTER IMPARTED THIS MESSAGE: +1 WISH THAT IN 1985 THERE WOULD BE A RESOLUTION NOT TO EMPHASISE A CRISIS BUT POSITIVE THINGS AND THAT THIS ALSO APPLIES TO NEWSPAPERS. +

DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS SAD THAT WHEN EVERYBODY ELSE WAS ADMIRING MALAYSIA, MALAYSIANS THEMSELVES RAN DOWN THEIR COUNTRY AND THEIR AIRLINE! AND THAT THIS RESULTED IN FOREIGNERS SHYING AWAY FROM THE COUNTRY.

+THEY RUN DOWN THEIR OWN AIRLINE SO THAT OTHER PEOPLE AND THEY THEMSELVES DON'T FLY MAS DESPITE PEOPLE TELLING ME OF THE EXCELLENT SERVICE.

+SURE, THERE ARE WEAKNESSES IN THE COUNTRY BUT THEY ARE NOT AS BIG AS THEY ARE MADE OUT TO BE. WE SHOULD APPRECIATE OUR OWN COUNTRY. IF WE RUN DOWN OURSELVES, HOW DO WE EXPECT PEOPLE TO LOOK UP TO US. +

THE PRIME MINISTER TOOK TO TASK AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TABLOID FOR PLAYING UP ON ITS FRONT PAGE ALMOST DAILY THE MCA CRISIS, THE PAPAN RADIOACTIVE WASTE DUMP ISSUE, THE BUKIT CHINA ISSUE AND THE PENANG COLLEGE GENERAL ISSUE. -- MORE

+I KNOW YOU HAVE PAPERS TO RUN BUT WE HAVE A COUNTRY TO RUN AND IF WE DESTROY OUR COUNTRY, WE WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR IT, + HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF PLAYING UP SUCH ISSUES, PEOPLE AT THE GRASSROOTS WERE ATTRACTED TO ISSUES AND BECAME CRISIS-ORIENTED AND BEGAN TO APPRECIATE REMOTE ISSUES INSTEAD OF THOSE TOUCHING THEM.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISMS WERE WELCOMED.

HE SAID THAT INSTANCES OF FOREIGNERS SHYING AWAY FROM MALAYSIA DID OCCUR AS A RESULT OF FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS PICKING UP THE NEWS SENSATIONALISED BY THE LOCAL PRESS.

*FOREIGNERS HESITATE TO COME TO MALAYSIA THINKING THAT WE ARE NEAR VIETNAM AND AFRAID THAT THEY WILL BE KILLED BY VIETNAMESE, + HE SAID. -- MORE

ELABORATING ON A SPEECH HE HAD MADE RECENTLY! DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE HAD GATHERED FROM HIS OBSERVATIONS THAT MALAYSIANS HAD DIFFICULTY WORKING WITH ONE ANOTHER.

HE SAID MALAYSIANS SEEMED TO LACK COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING UNLIKE THE JAPANESE WHO HE SAID WOULD COMBINE AND COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER TO WIN CONTRACTS EVEN IF THEY WERE RIVALS. -- BERNAMA

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