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04/05 BERNAMA

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MAHATHIR-HOTEL

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KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 14 (BERNAMA) -- BIG HOTELS IN THE COUNTRY MIGHT NOT HAVE TO FACE THE PROBLEMS THEY ARE EXPERIENCING NOW IF THEY HAD LISTENED TO THE GOVERNMENT'S APPEAL NOT TO RAISE THEIR ROOM RATES. DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE HOTELS HAD TO GRAPPLE WITH THE PROBLEMS NOW BECAUSE THEY DID NOT HEED THE GOVERNMENT'S APPEAL IN THE PAST NOT TO RAISE THEIR RATES WHEN THE NATION FACED A SHORTAGE OF ROOMS THEN.

SPEAKING AT THE TOPPING-OFF CEREMONY OF THE PAN PACIFIC KUALA LUMPUR HOTEL AT THE PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE HERE, HE SAID THAT THE CURRENT GLOBAL RECESSION HAD RESULTED IN FEWER GUESTS IN HOTELS IN THE COUNTRY.

THE HOTELS HAD TO PUT UP WITH HIGH MAINTENANCE COSTS, AND AS A RESULT, MANY HOTELS WERE NOW +COMPETING+ TO REDUCE THEIR ROOM RATES, HE SAID.

AT THE SAME TIME, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, HOTEL STAFF WERE TRYING TO SEEK HIGHER WAGES IN THE BELIEF THAT THE HIGH ROOM RATES HAD ENABLED THE HOTELS THEY WERE WORKING IN TO RAKE IN HUGE PROFITS.

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#### MAHATHIR-HOTEL 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT SERVED THE HOTELS RIGHT FOR RAISING THE RATES WHEN THE COUNTRY FACED A SHORTAGE OF HOTEL ROOMS.

HE STRESSED THAT WHATEVER THE GOVERNMENT DID WAS FOR THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY AND NOT FOR ANY SPECIFIC GROUP.

HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT SERI PACIFIC CORPORATION SDN BHD WOULD ENSURE THAT THE PAN PACIFIC KUALA LUMPUR HOTEL CHARGED MODERATE RATES TO ATTRACT GUESTS.

HE ALSO STRESSED THAT THE MALAYSIAN AIRLINE SYSTEM (MAS), WHICH WAS A PARTNER IN THE VENTURE, SHOULD WORK HARD TO ENSURE SUCCESS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT THROUGH HARD WORK, PAN PACIFIC KUALA LUMPUR HOTEL WOULD BE ABLE TO COMPETE WITH THE EXISTING BIG HOTELS AND THOSE WHICH WERE TO BE OPENED IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL. --

MORE

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MAHATHIR-HOTEL 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOTEL WHICH WAS ON SCHEDULE. THE HOTEL IS EXPECTED TO BE HANDED OVER TO THE OWNER ON SEPT 30.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE THAT THERE LOCAL CONTRACTORS WHO WERE NOT HAPPY WITH THE AWARDING OF MAJOR PROJECTS TO FOREIGNERS.

EXPLAINING WHY FOREIGNERS WERE OFFERED THE PROJECTS, HE SAID THAT AS LOCAL CONTRACTORS STILL USED TRADITIONAL AND OUTDATED METHODS, WORK COULD BE DELAYED AND CONSTRUCTION MIGHT HAVE BEEN BEHIND SCHEDULE. THIS MIGHT RESULT IN BUILDING COSTS BEING DOUBLED.

CITING THE PAN PACIFIC KUALA LUMPUR HOTEL AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH CONSTRUCTION IN THE INITIAL STAGES WAS BEHIND SCHEDULE, THE AVAILABILITY OF SKILLED MANPOWER HAD ENABLED THE WORK TO BE RIGHT ON SCHEDULE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS GLAD TO NOTE THAT LOCAL CONTRACTORS WERE BEGINNING TO RECTIFY THEIR WEAKNESSES AND WERE NOW ABLE TO PUT UP BUILDINGS EFFICIENTLY. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-HOTEL 4 KUALA LUMPUR

HE ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS MEANINGLESS TO TALK OF TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY IF THE LOCALS WERE NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT IT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, ACCOMPANIED BY SERI PACIFIC CHAIRMAN DATUK RAHIM ABDUL RAHMAN, UMNO SECRETARY-GENERAL DATUK SERI SANUSI JUNID AND THE CONTRACTORS, LATER INSPECTED THE BUILDING. -- BERNAMA  
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