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MAHATHIR-COMPUTER

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KUALA LUMPUR, JUNE 7 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY DESCRIBED THE THAI-INVENTED MICRO-COMPUTER FOR THE TEACHING AND STUDYING OF THE QURAN AS SIMILAR TO THE FIRST USE OF THE PRINTING MACHINE WHICH HAD ENABLED THE QURAN TO BE WIDELY CIRCULATED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

THE MICRO-SYSTEM EDUCATIONAL MODULE WAS DEVELOPED AFTER A THREE-YEAR RESEARCH BY ENGINEERS OF THE ISLAMIC SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION OF THAILAND.

A SET OF THE MODULE WAS PRESENTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FOUNDATION, HAJAH ZUBAIDAH SANGDAO BIAWALLA, AT HIS OFFICE HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE COMPUTER WOULD BE A VALUABLE INSTRUMENT IN THE PROPAGATION OF ISLAM.

+THIS DEVICE DEVELOPED BY OUR MUSLIM BROTHERS IN THAILAND IS IN KEEPING WITH THE TIMES, ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE HAVE BEEN DIFFICULTIES IN OUR EFFORTS TO SPREAD THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

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+THE USE OF THE COMPUTER IS EQUAL TO THE FIRST TIME THE PRINTING MACHINE WAS USED TO ENLARGE THE CIRCULATION OF THE HOLY BOOK AMONG MUSLIMS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE USE OF THE PRINTING MACHINE HAD ENABLED A GREATER NUMBER OF MUSLIMS TO READ THE QURAN AND ADDED THAT THE USE OF COMPUTERS IN THE FUTURE WOULD ENABLE GREATER PROGRESS TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE PROPAGATION OF ISLAM.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT LIKE THE PRINTING MACHINE, THE COMPUTER COULD ALSO BE MISUSED IF IT FELL INTO THE WRONG HANDS AND THIS WOULD BE A DISSERVICE TO ISLAM.

BUT, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE FAULT WAS NOT WITH THE SOFTWARE BUT WITH THOSE WHO WOULD MISUSE IT FOR THEIR OWN ENDS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR PLEDGED MALAYSIA'S SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO THE FOUNDATION WITHIN HER CAPABILITY IN FURTHER DEVELOPING THE USES OF THE COMPUTER.

HE SAID MALAYSIA WOULD ALSO STUDY THE FOUNDATION'S REQUEST IF IT WISHED TO UNDERTAKE SUCH DEVELOPMENT TOGETHER WITH ISLAMIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE COUNTRY. -- MORE

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IN HIS PRESENTATION, THE FOUNDATION'S DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT QURANIC STUDIES PROJECT, ENCIK HAMID THITTI SIAMWALLA, SAID THE FOUNDATION HOPED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE HELP AND GUIDANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY HERE TO FORMULATE A METHODOICAL AND EVENLY UNIFORM CURRICULUM ON ISLAMIC STUDIES.

THE FOUNDATION'S RESEARCH TEAM WAS PRESENTLY DEVELOPING A SECOND-GENERATION MODEL THAT HE HOPED WOULD BE THE +ULTIMATE+ WORK-STATION FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS OF ISLAM ALIKE.

USING THE SECOND-GENERATION MODEL, ENCIK HAMID SAID, MUSLIMS WOULD BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE AND EXCHANGE AMONG THEMSELVES AND ALSO TO ACCESS INFORMATION STORED IN THE COMPUTERS OF THE VARIOUS ISLAMIC CENTRES THE WORLD OVER.

HE SAID THE FOUNDATION WAS ALSO WORKING ON THE COMBINATION OF AN AUDIO-VISUAL DEVICE OR SYSTEM THAT WOULD REPRODUCE THE CORRECT ANUNCIATION OF THE QURANIC PASSAGE OR VERSE AS IT WAS BEING DISPLAYED ON THE MONITOR SCREEN.

ENCIK HAMID BELIEVED THE INVENTION OF THIS COMPUTER WOULD ENABLE +THE FUTURE TO SWIFTLY CATCH UP WITH THE PAST GLORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ISLAM+.

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HE SAID A COMPLETE SET OF THE COMPUTER OFFERED TO ISLAMIC ORGANISATIONS WOULD COST IN THE REGION OF US\$3,500 (M\$8,750), WHICH WAS CHEAPER WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER SIMILAR INTERNATIONAL TYPES WHICH COST ABOUT US\$10,000 (M\$25,000).

PRESENT AT THE CEREMONY WERE THE FOUNDATION'S SECRETARY, PUAN JAMILAH ACHARA NA SONGKLA, DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT DATUK DR YUSOF NOOR AND DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE ISLAMIC CENTRE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT ASSOCIATE PROF DR ABDUL HAMID OTHMAN.

THE FOUNDATION WILL BE MAKING A SIMILAR PRESENTATION TO THE ISLAMIC CENTRE AND WILL ALSO DEMONSTRATE THE USES OF THE COMPUTER TO THE ISLAMIC BANK OF MALAYSIA. -- BERNAMA

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