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MAHATHIR-TREATMENT
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KUALA LUMPUR, FEB 25 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CALLED ON PRIVATE HOSPITALS TO ACCEPT ANY PERSON IN NEED OF MEDICAL TREATMENT, PARTICULARLY ACCIDENT VICTIMS, AND THINK ABOUT PAYMENT LATER.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT SHOULD AN ACCIDENT OCCUR IN FRONT OF A HOSPITAL, IT WAS INCUMBENT UPON ANY DOCTOR THERE TO RENDER MEDICAL AID WITHOUT FIRST FINDING OUT WHETHER THE VICTIM COULD AFFORD TO PAY FOR THE TREATMENT.

+IN CASES OF EMERGENCY, GIVE TREATMENT IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT THINK OF PROFITS AS THIS COULD DENY THE VICTIM OF TREATMENT.

+AT LEAST ADMINISTER FIRST AID AND THEN SEND THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE NEAREST GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL,+ HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE \$16 - MILLION TAWAKAL MEDICAL SPECIALIST CENTRE -- A PRIVATE MEDICAL ORGANIZATION -- IN JALAN PAHANG HERE. THE CENTRE IS RUN BY 12 SPECIALISTS, INCLUDING IN CARDIOLOGY, UROLOGY, ORTHOPAEDICS AND RADIOLOGY.

THE REMARKS BY DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REFLECT THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH HE VIEWS THE REPORTED RELUCTANCE OF PRIVATE MEDICAL CENTRES AND CLINICS TO TREAT EMERGENCY CASES, IN PARTICULAR VICTIMS OF ACCIDENTS. THERE HAD REPORTEDLY BEEN CASES WHERE THE VICTIMS HAD DIED BECAUSE OF TARDY ACTION.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE ALSO DID NOT WANT DOCTORS TO CARRY OUT UNNECESSARY EXAMINATION OF A PATIENT TO AN EXTENT WHEN IT BECAME A BURDEN TO THE PATIENT.

+I DO NOT WANT DOCTORS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE UNHEALTHY PRACTICES WE HEAR OF IN OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE THE PATIENT IS SUBJECTED TO VARIOUS CLINICAL AND LABORATORY EXAMINATIONS.

+DOCTORS SHOULD NOT CONDUCT UNNECESSARY EXAMINATIONS THAT WOULD BE A BURDEN FOR THE PATIENT JUST TO AVOID BEING SUED FOR NEGLIGENCE,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR CITED THE CASE OF A PERSON WITH AN INJURED FINGER IN THE UNITED STATES WHO HAD TO PAY US\$18,000 TO UNDERGO SCANNING AND A BLOOD TEST BECAUSE THE DOCTOR WAS AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT BE TAKEN TO COURT LATER FOR OVERLOOKING SOMETHING.

HE SAID THAT TO PREVENT INDISCRIMINATE SUING OF PEOPLE, THE GOVERNMENT HAD IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON COMPENSATION TO BE PAID IN SUCH SUITS

+WE SHOULD NOT COPY THE PRACTICE IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHERE DOCTORS SERVE ONLY DURING OFFICE HOURS AND REFUSE TO RESPOND, SAY FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN PLAYING GOLF. THIS IS BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID THAT IF THEY DO NOT PROVIDE A THOROUGH CHECK, THEY MAY BE PROSECUTED AND WILL HAVE TO PAY HEAVILY,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REMINDED PRIVATE DOCTORS THAT PATIENTS WERE +YOUR BOSSES+ AND THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BE AFRAID OF PROVIDING THE NECESSARY TREATMENT, PARTICULARLY IN THE CASE OF ACCIDENT VICTIMS.

HE SAID DOCTORS SHOULD NEVER GET TIRED OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF THEIR PATIENTS BECAUSE NEGLECT OF THEIR DUTIES WOULD CAUSE THEM TO LOSE THEIR REPUTATION AS GOOD DOCTORS.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO STRESSED ON THE NEED FOR THE PEOPLE TO DISCARD THE ATTITUDE OF GOING ONLY TO A HOSPITAL OR CLINIC RUN BY MEMBERS OF THEIR OWN COMMUNITY. HE SAID THE COUNTRY HAD VARIOUS SERVICES OF A HIGH STANDARD AND THEY WERE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.

LATER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AND HIS WIFE, DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH, TOURED THE 150-BED FOUR-STOREY MEDICAL CENTRE WHICH WENT INTO OPERATIONS LAST JUNE. -- MORE

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