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MAHATHIR-MEDICAL
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EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AT 10 TONIGHT
KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 25 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT WILL LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF LEASING ITS HOSPITALS TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND ALLOW PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS TO WORK IN SUCH INSTITUTIONS ACCORDING TO A PRE-DETERMINED SCHEDULE, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TONIGHT.

THE IMPLEMENTATION, IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO PRIVATISE THE MEDICAL SERVICE, WOULD PROBABLY BE CARRIED OUT IN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY IDENTIFIED SEVERAL MEDICAL SERVICES THAT COULD BE PRIVATISED, HE ADDED AT THE MALAYSIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DINNER HERE.

SO FAR A PUBLIC HOSPITAL, LADY TEMPLER, HAD BEEN LEASED OUT TO A PRIVATE COMPANY, AND ALTHOUGH SEVERAL PROBLEMS HAD CROPPED UP DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HOPED THESE WOULD BE RESOLVED.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE THE SETTING UP OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS AS A MOVE TO UPGRADE THE EFFICIENCY AND RESTRUCTURE THE PRIVATE MEDICAL SECTOR TO COMPLEMENT THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE MORE EFFECTIVELY. -- MORE
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B E867 AAE
MAHATHIR-MEDICAL 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THESE EFFORTS REFLECTED THE GOVERNMENT'S ASPIRATION TO ENCOURAGE THE PRIVATE MEDICAL SECTOR PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE.

HE HOPED PRIVATE DOCTORS WOULD ENSURE THAT THE SERVICE THEY PROVIDED WOULD BE ACCESSIBLE ALSO TO LOW-INCOME EARNERS AND THE LESS FORTUNATE.

IN THIS CONNECTION, HE EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE MEDICAL SERVICES WHICH HE FELT WAS CONCENTRATED TOO MUCH IN URBAN AREAS AND IN STATES WITH HIGH PER CAPITA INCOMES SUCH AS THE FEDERAL TERRITORY, SELANGOR, PULAU PINANG AND PERAK.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HOPED THE MMA WOULD HELP TO ENCOURAGE THE SETTING UP OF MORE PRIVATE PRACTICES IN SMALL TOWNS TO SERVE THE RESIDENTS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL SERVICES THE GOVERNMENT WANTED THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO PLAY COMPLEMENTARY ROLES IN MAKING A SUCCESS OF THE NATIONAL MEDICAL POLICY. -- MORE
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B E868 AAE
MAHATHIR-MEDICAL 3 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

HE SAID THE PRIVATE MEDICAL SECTOR HAD PROVEN ITS CAPABILITY TO EXPAND. UP TO 1984, 54 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DOCTORS IN THE COUNTRY WERE FOUND IN THAT SECTOR.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT WITH GOVERNMENT EFFORTS AND THE COOPERATION OF THE PRIVATE MEDICAL SECTOR THROUGH PLANNED MEDICAL PROGRAMMES THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE PEOPLE WOULD CONTINUE TO RISE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID A LARGE PORTION OF THE \$698 MILLION ALLOCATED FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES UNDER THE FIFTH MALAYSIA PLAN WOULD GO TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HOSPITALS AND RURAL MEDICAL SERVICES.

ATTENTION WOULD CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO RURAL HEALTH SERVICES, PARTICULARLY IN THE PROVISION OF BASIC HEALTH-CARE FACILITIES, AND TO NARROW THE GAP IN THE PROVISION OF SUCH SERVICES AMONG THE STATES.

-- BERNAMA
2035MST 25 04 86