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MAHATHIR-STUDENTS

FROM ABDUL RACHMAN NORDIN AND LESLIE LIM

NEW DELHI, JAN 31⁸⁷ (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD ^{(P) Overseas} ~~TRP~~

TOLD MALAYSIAN STUDENTS HERE THAT THEY COULD END UP DOING THE PROVERBIAL +SEPAK KERTAS+ (KICKING PAPERS) IF ON RETURNING HOME WITH THEIR DEGREES, THEY DO NOT CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORK ESPECIALLY DURING THE RECESSION.

THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD THEM THAT WITH ALREADY 36,000 JOBLESS GRADUATES BACK HOME, THEY MUST BE ABLE TO APPLY THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THEY HAD ACQUIRED IN ORDER TO EARN AN INCOME.

HE SAID THEY SHOULD NOT PIN TOO MUCH HOPE ON EMPLOYMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE BUT MUST BE ABLE TO APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO SURVIVE.

QUOTING A POPULAR KEDAH SAYING, HE TOLD A GATHERING OF ABOUT 50 MALAYSIAN STUDENTS IN AND AROUND NEW DELHI, AS WELL AS FROM MADRAS AND POONA THAT +UNLESS YOU ARE ABLE TO APPLY THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITIES, YOU MIGHT BE DISAPPOINTED AND COULD END UP WITH DOING THE SEPAK KERTAS.+

FOREIGN MINISTER DATUK RAIS YATIM, THE MINISTRY'S SECRETARY-GENERAL, TAN SRI ZAINAL ABIDIN SULONG, AND MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TO INDIA MOHAMAD HARON WERE ALSO PRESENT. -- MORE
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THE PRIME MINISTER SPOKE AT LENGTH AND ANSWERED QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR ON THE TIGHT ECONOMIC POSITION THE COUNTRY WAS FACING, THE LOOK EAST POLICY, ISLAM, PRIVATISATION, THE FIFTH MALAYSIA PLAN, JOB PROSPECTS FOR STUDENTS OF THE VARIOUS DISCIPLINES AND THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION.

THE STUDENTS ALSO BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION VISA PROBLEMS, DETERIORATING COMMAND OF BAHASA MALAYSIA WHILE ABROAD, NON-RECOGNITION OF POST-GRADUATES COURSES OF SOME INDIAN UNIVERSITIES AND THE CONCEPT OF AN +OPEN UNIVERSITY+ IN MALAYSIA.

ON JOB PROSPECTS FOR GRADUATES FROM INDIA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THOSE IN MEDICAL DISCIPLINE AS COMPARED WITH ENGINEERING MIGHT STILL FIND IT EASIER TO GET INTO GOVERNMENT SERVICE AS THE COUNTRY STILL NEEDED DOCTORS WILLING TO SERVE IN THE RURAL AREAS AND FOR RETRAINING AS SPECIALISTS.

WHILE GIVING HIS UNDERTAKING TO SEE WHAT THE DEWAN BAHASA AND PUSTAKA COULD DO TO HELP MALAYSIAN STUDENTS MAINTAIN GOOD COMMAND OF BAHASA MALAYSIA WHILE ABROAD, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SUGGESTED THE BEST WAY FOR THEM TO BE PROFICIENT IN THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE WAS TO GROUP TOGETHER FOR AN HOUR OR TWO DAILY AND DISCUSS THEIR WORK IN BAHASA MALAYSIA. -- MORE
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TO ANOTHER QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ADVISED MALAYSIAN STUDENTS SPECIALISING IN ISLAMIC STUDIES THAT THEY COULD DO MUCH GOOD TO THE COUNTRY BY HELPING TO BRING ABOUT UNITY OF THE UMMAH.

THIS MORNING, HE LAID WREATHS AT THE RAJGHAT -- THE SITE WHERE MAHATHMA GANDHI WAS CREMATED.

THE MALAYSIAN LEADER ALSO PLANTED A SAPLING AT THE PARK ADJACENT TO THE RAJGHAT, LOCATED ON THE BANKS OF THE YAMUNA RIVER.

HE ALSO LAID WREATHS AT THE NEHRU AND INDIRA GANDHI MEMORIALS LOCATED IN THE SAME VICINITY.

THIS AFTERNOON, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR VISITED THE INDIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR AND MET SENIOR INDIAN JOURNALISTS AT THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE.

LATER, HE HOSTED A DINNER FOR LEADING INDIAN INDUSTRIALISTS. HE WILL LEAVE FOR HOME TOMORROW MORNING. -- BERNAMA

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