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MAHATHIR-TRADITION
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(P)
KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 27 (BERNAMA) -- THE PEOPLE MUST DISCARD NON-BENEFICIAL TRADITIONAL VALUES IN THE EFFORTS TO BUILD A MALAYSIAN SOCIETY THAT HAS HONOUR AND RESPECT AND WHOSE RESILIENCE HAS BEEN TESTED AND FOUND TRUE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IN BUILDING A NEW AND PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY, THE PEOPLE MUST HAVE THE MORAL COURAGE TO ACCEPT THE NECESSITY TO DISCARD VALUES THAT WERE NOT BENEFICIAL OR WHICH OBSTRUCTED REALISATION OF THEIR ASPIRATIONS.

LAUNCHING AN ANTHOLOGY OF SELECTED POEMS AND DRAMAS BY NATIONAL LITERARY FIGURE USMAN AWANG AT DEWAN BAHASA DAN PUSTAKA HERE, HE SAID THE PEOPLE SHOULD CHOOSE AND PRACTISE ONLY THE POSITIVE VALUES AS NOT ALL THE TRADITIONAL VALUES WERE GOOD AND COULD BE UPHELD.

SOCIETY MUST HAVE THE COURAGE TO POINT OUT WHETHER OR NOT AN OLD VALUE WAS OUT OF ALIGNMENT WITH CURRENT REQUIREMENTS AND GIVE A NEW INTERPRETATION OF SUCH VALUES.

+IF THE STRENGTH AND CREATIVITY OF THE PAST GENERATION ARE IDENTIFIED AND ADJUSTED TO CONFORM WITH PRESENT DAY NEEDS, SEVERAL IDEAL VALUES WILL BE UNCOVERED FOR DEVELOPING A CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID WRITERS SHOULD PRODUCE BOOKS THAT EXPRESSED THE PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS AND FEELINGS AS WRITINGS THAT LACKED ANY COMMITMENT TOWARDS THEIR SUBJECT WOULD BE POINTLESS READING.

LITERARY WORKS THAT ENJOYED POPULAR ACCEPTANCE AMONG THE PUBLIC WERE THOSE THAT REFLECTED DIRECT INTERACTION BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND THE WRITER WHILE BOOKS THAT DID NOT CARRY THE PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS WERE GENERALLY REJECTED.

+WRITERS OF LITERATURE SHOULD ALSO BE AWARE OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REALITIES IN THE COUNTRY AS LITERATURE IS BUT A DERIVATION OF THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS AND DESIRES,+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT WHATEVER THE WRITER HOPED TO ACHIEVE, HE COULD NOT IGNORE THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOCIETY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID WRITERS SHOULD NOT USE THE PEN AND PAPER TO EXPRESS ONLY HIS OWN ATTITUDES AND THOUGHT BUT SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO CURRENT CHANGES AND TRENDS AND BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY.

HE ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS STILL NOT SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT LEVEL OF READING INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE AFTER ITS VARIOUS EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE THE READING HABIT AMONG THEM. -- MORE

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HOWEVER, THE LEVEL OF READING INTEREST HAD SHOWN SOME IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PAST, PARTICULARLY AMONG URBAN RESIDENTS, BUT MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE, ESPECIALLY IN THE RURAL SECTOR, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE VARIOUS FACTORS INHIBITING ENHANCEMENT OF THE READING HABIT AMONG THE RURAL POPULATION, SUCH AS ECONOMIC AND LEISURE TIME FACTORS, CALLED FOR SERIOUS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION.

ON ENCIK USMAN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HIS WORKS WOULD BECOME AN INVALUABLE HERITAGE TO NATIONAL LITERATURE, ADDING THAT ENCIK USMAN WAS NOT ONLY ACTIVE IN THE WORLD OF LITERATURE BUT WAS ALSO A CHAMPION OF THE ORDINARY PEOPLE. -- BERNAMA

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