

5 E473 AAE
MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, DEC 8 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY EFFORTS TOWARDS STRIKING A RACIAL BALANCE IN THE ECONOMIC SECTOR OF THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT WITH SINCERITY AND HONESTY TO QUICKEN THE PROCESS OF INTER-RACIAL UNDERSTANDING.

UNDERSTANDING AND UNITY AMONG THE RACES WERE VITAL BECAUSE A PLURAL SOCIETY LIKE MALAYSIA'S COULD NOT ESCAPE FROM THE REALITIES OF LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

+IF THE RACES IN THE COUNTRY ARE NOT ABLE TO HAVE UNDERSTANDING AND RAPPORT WITH ONE ANOTHER, OUR TIME WILL BE TAKEN UP WITH QUARRELLING AMONG OURSELVES WHILE THE OUTSIDE WORLD CONTINUES TO PROGRESS AT A RAPID PACE AND LEAVE US FAR BEHIND,+ HE SAID WHEN OPENING A NEIGHBOURLINESS WORKCAMP AT THE KANCHING RECREATIONAL FOREST, TEMPLER'S PARK NEAR HERE.

THE FIVE-DAY WORKCAMP ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL UNITY DEPARTMENT IS ATTENDED BY 200 YOUNG PEOPLE FROM RUKUNTETANGGA SECTORS IN THE FEDERAL TERRITORY OF KUALA LUMPUR.

DATUK SERI DA MAHATHIR SAID THE EMERGENCE OF A NATION WAS FOUNDED AND DEVELOPED ON CERTAIN ELEMENTS AND FOR THIS COUNTRY, FOUR ELEMENTS FORMED THE BASIS. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE FIRST AND MOST CRUCIAL WAS THE CONSENSUS REACHED AMONG THE RACES JUST BEFORE NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, FOLLOWED BY AN ENLIGHTENED UNDERSTANDING OF THE COUNTRY'S HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, THE COLONIAL RECOGNITION OF THE CIVILISATION AND CULTURE OF THOSE TIMES, AND LASTLY THE MASTERY AND USE OF BAHASA MALAYSIA AS THE COUNTRY'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGE WITHOUT SUPPRESSING THE USE OF OTHER LANGUAGES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR IS CONFIDENT THE COUNTRY WILL ADVANCE MORE RAPIDLY IF THE PEOPLE OF ALL RACES MOBILISED AND COMBINED ALL THE RESOURCES AT THEIR DISPOSAL FOR THIS PURPOSE.

TOWARDS THIS END, THE FIRST STEP WAS GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER, NOT JUST FOR SOCIABILITY BUT TO LEARN ONE ANOTHER'S CUSTOMS AND TABOOS SO THAT THE SENSITIVITIES OF EACH RACE WERE COMPREHENDED.

+FOLLOWING THIS, WE SHOULD CONSCIOUSLY AVOID SAYING OR DOING SOMETHING THAT CAN HURT THE FEELINGS OF OUR FRIENDS OF A DIFFERENT RACE AND RELIGION,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID BECAUSE EACH COMMUNITY HAD ITS OWN WEAKNESSES, THERE MUST BE SINCERE AND HONEST COOPERATION AMONG THEM TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS, NOT A +TOKEN GESTURE WHICH IS NOT THE WAY.+ -- MORE

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MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR

THE GROUP WEAK IN THE AREA OF CULTURE SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THE COMMUNITY THAT EMPHASISED CULTURAL TRADITIONS WHILE THOSE WEAK COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY SHOULD BE HELPED BY THOSE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN THESE FIELDS.

+ALL QUARTERS SHOULD COLLECTIVELY UNDERTAKE THE TASK. WINDOW DRESSING OR TOKEN GESTURE IN BRINGING ABOUT A BALANCE SHOULD BE TOTALLY ELIMINATED.

+PRACTICES SUCH AS THE ALI-BABA TYPE OF BUSINESS WHERE ALI SLEEPS AND BABA WORKS WILL NOT HELP FOSTER INTER-COMMUNAL RELATIONS,+ HE ADDED.

AS LONG AS THIS PRACTICE EXISTED, ALI WOULD NEVER GAIN BUSINESS SKILLS AND WOULD HAVE TO DEPEND ON BABA FOREVER. A RACIAL BALANCE IN THE BUSINESS SECTOR WOULD NEVER BE ACHIEVED AND RACIAL SUSPICIONS WOULD REMAIN.

HE SAID THE TRUE ELEMENTS OF THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL UNITY HAD NOT BEEN PROPERLY GRASPED BY MANY PEOPLE, LEADING TO THE EMERGENCE OF VARIOUS PERCEPTIONS BY DIFFERENT GROUPS IN SOCIETY HAVING THEIR OWN PERSPECTIVE OF THE MATTER. -- MORE

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MAHATHI 4 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUKSERI DR MAHATHIR WANTS THIS DIVERGENCE RECTIFIED, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE YOUNG, AND IS PROUD THE NATIONAL UNITY DEPARTMENT IS TAKING THE INITIATIVE THROUGH ITS WORKCAMP PROGRAMME.

ELABORATING ON THE BASIC ELEMENTS THAT WENT INTO THE FORMATION OF NATIONHOOD FOR THE COUNTRY, HE SAID BEFORE THE COLONIALISTS ARRIVED, THE COUNTRY ALREADY HAD A CIVILISATION AND CULTURE THROUGH A SYSTEMATIC FORM OF ADMINISTRATION.

WHEN THE FOREIGNERS CAME TO STAY, THEY FOUND IT NECESSARY TO ADJUST THEMSELVES AND THEIR WAY OF LIFE TO CONFORM WITH THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE THAT ALREADY EXISTED.

THE COLONIALISTS, IN ACKNOWLEDGING THIS FACT, HAD RESPECTED THE CUSTOMS, TABOOS, RELIGION AND INSTITUTION OF MONARCHY OF THE PEOPLE AND ENSHRINED THESE ELEMENTS IN THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, WHICH WAS FORMULATED WITH THE ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE OF THE COLONIALISTS.

IN THE CONSENSUS REACHED AMONG THE RACES BEFORE MERDEKA, SEVERAL MATTERS RELATING TO THESE FACTORS WERE DISCUSSED AND AGREED UPON THROUGH A SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE AND MUTUAL RESPECT AMONG THE LEADERS OF ALL THE RACES AT THAT TIME, HE ADDED.

DATUKSERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE YOUNG GENERATION OF TODAY GOING THROUGH THE PROCESS OF SOCIALISATION FOUNDED ON THESE BASIC VALUES SHOULD PASS ON THEIR ENLIGHTENMENT TO THEIR CHILDREN AS A CONTINUING HERITAGE IN ENSURING THE COUNTRY REMAINED PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS.

-- BERNAMA

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