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B E118 AAE  
MAHATHIR-WASTAGE

BM

MIRI, JULY 4 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY IT IS THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE GIVING THE PEOPLE INFRASTRUCTURE AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE BEFORE THE NEED FOR THE FACILITIES BECOMES PRESSING.

HE SAID EARLY PROVISION OF FACILITIES WAS NOT A WASTAGE AS CLAIMED BY SOME QUARTERS BUT AN INVESTMENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE FACE OF THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

+WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE NEED BECOME REALLY URGENT BEFORE WE BEGIN TO PROVIDE THE INFRASTRUCTURE,+ HE SAID WHEN OPENING THE MIRI NEW AIRPORT HERE.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW AIRPORT COSTING ABOUT \$17 MILLION STARTED IN 1982 AND WAS COMPLETED IN 1985. THE RUNWAY CAN TAKE LARGE AIRCRAFT SUCH AS THE BOEING 737 AND IS USABLE DURING THE NIGHT AS WELL.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT WAS BETTER THAT THE GOVERNMENT BORROWED TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTURE BEFORE THE NEED FOR THE FACILITIES BECAME URGENT AND THE COST HAD ESCALATED. -- MORE  
2047MST 04 07 88

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B E119 AAE  
MAHATHIR-WASTAGE 2 MIRI

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR CITED AS AN EXAMPLE THE KUALA LUMPUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT SUBANG PROJECTED TO HANDLE 400,000 PASSENGERS BY 1984 BUT THAT YEAR HANDLED ABOUT THREE MILLION.

HE SAID THIS SHOWED THE PROJECTIONS MADE WERE NOT ACCURATE AND THE CRITICISMS EARLIER THAT CONSTRUCTION OF THE AIRPORT WAS A WASTE WERE PROVEN UNTRUE.

THESE CRITICS HAD KEPT QUIET WHEN THEY SAW THE AIRPORT EVEN THEN WAS STILL UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE DEMAND FOR ITS USE AND DID NOT PROPOSE THAT IT BE EXPANDED.

HE HIT OUT AT THIS PHENOMENON IN THE COUNTRY, IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT ESPECIALLY WAS ALWAYS WRONGED AND CRITICISED WHENEVER IT EMBARKED ON SOMETHING FOR THE GOOD OF THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO BUILD AIRPORTS IN THE FUTURE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE HIGHLY MOBILE POPULATION TRAVELLING FOR THE PURPOSE OF EITHER TOURISM OR BUSINESS. -- MORE  
2052MST 04 07 88

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B E124 AAE  
MAHATHIR-WASTAGE 3 MIRI

ON MIRI AIRPORT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WOULD HELP MIRI ACCELERATE ITS DEVELOPMENT AND BENEFIT NOT JUST AIR TRAVELLERS BUT ALSO THE SERVICES INDUSTRY.

EARLIER, SARAWAK CHIEF MINISTER DATUK PATINGGI HAJI ABDUL TAIB MAHMUD SAID THE AIRPORT WOULD HELP DEVELOP MIRI AS A MELTING POT OF MANY RACES AND GENERATE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT AMONG RESIDENTS.

HE SAID EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR TOURISM AND IN THIS CONNECTION, THE STATE GOVERNMENT WAS PLANNING THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN AIRSTRIP FOR AIR SERVICES TO MULU.

TRANSPORT MINISTER DATUK DR LING LIONG SIK SAID THE AIRPORT WOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AIR TRANSPORTATION AND TOURISM INDUSTRIES AND FUNCTION AS THE PULSE FOR RURAL SERVICES IN THE STATE.

A STUDY BY HIS MINISTRY RECENTLY PROJECTED GROWTH OF THE AIR TRAFFIC INDUSTRY AT THE AIRPORT AT EIGHT PERCENT OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

IN 1960, THE AIRPORT HANDLED ONLY 4,910 PASSENGERS BUT LAST YEAR, HANDLED 501,967. -- BERNAMA  
2123MST 04 07 88