

D480

B E798 AAE  
MAHATHIR-IDENTITY RRR  
BM

88  
KUALA LUMPUR, AUG 1 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT'S ASPIRATION IS TO FORGE A MALAYSIAN NATION THAT IS UNIQUE WITHOUT ELIMINATING THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS AND CULTURES OF THE RACES THAT HAVE MADE MALAYSIA THEIR HOMELAND.

BY RETAINING THEIR ORIGINAL RACIAL IDENTITY, THE PEOPLE COULD STILL FORM A MEANINGFUL MALAYSIAN NATION, HE SAID WHEN LAUNCHING A SOCIAL UNITY PROGRAMME HERE.

HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD HAVING CITIZENS OF DIFFERENT RACES BUT WHO ANSWER TO A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY.

AS TIME GOES BY, MORE COUNTRIES WILL HAVE PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC DESCENT, ACCORDING TO HIM.

+THE UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA, INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES ALSO HAVE A PLURAL SOCIETY BUT WE RECOGNISE THEM AS AMERICANS, AUSTRALIANS AND INDIANS BECAUSE OF CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS IN THEM,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

1707MST 01 08 88

D493

B E806 AAE  
MAHATHIR-IDENTITY 2 KUALA LUMPUR RRR

+ALTHOUGH WE ARE MORE LIBERAL THAN THEM, WE CAN STILL DEVELOP CHARACTERISTICS THAT CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS BEING UNIQUE TO THE MALAYSIAN NATION,+ THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

HE SAID DURING THE MALACCA SULTANATE, PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RACES MINGLED WITH ONE ANOTHER AND INTER-MARRIAGES WERE COMMON, GIVING RISE TO THE CHINESE BABA, MALACCA PORTUGUESE AND CHETTY COMMUNITIES.

HE SAID WHILE RETAINING THEIR RACIAL IDENTITIES, THE PEOPLE OF MELAKA SUCCEEDED IN PROJECTING AN IDENTITY UNIQUE TO THAT STATE.

IN PULAU PINANG TOO, THIS PROCESS OCCURRED DURING THE BRITISH ERA WITH INTER-RACIAL MARRIAGES OFTEN TAKING PLACE AMONG MUSLIMS OF THE DIFFERENT RACES AND AT TIMES BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND NON-MUSLIMS.

+IT RESULTED IN COMMUNITIES LIKE ARAB PERANAKAN, MELAYU PERANAKAN, MELAYU SIAM, SAM SAM, ACEH, MANDAILING, RAWA, BUGIS AND BANJAR. THERE WERE ALSO OTHER COMMUNITIES FROM INDONESIA WHO ACCEPTED MALAY CUSTOMS AND WERE RECOGNISED AS MALAYS, WHILE THE BABA, PORTUGUESE AND CHETTY COMMUNITIES DID NOT LOSE THEIR IDENTITIES. -- MORE

1730MST 01 08 88

D514

B E823 AAE  
MAHATHIR-IDENTITY 3 KUALA LUMPUR RRR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT UNFORTUNATELY, SINCE INDEPENDENCE, EFFORTS WERE MADE TO INTENSIFY RACIALISM TO THE EXTENT THAT CULTURAL TRADITIONS WITH A MALAYSIAN CHARACTERISTIC AMONG THE NON-MALAYS WERE LOST.

HE SAID THIS TREND WAS VERY REGRETTABLE BECAUSE THE CULTURE OF THE MALACCA SULTANATE ERA SHOULD HAVE BEEN MADE A GOOD MODEL FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THE RACES IN MALAYSIA.

IN EFFORTS TO ENHANCE SOCIAL UNITY, CULTURAL ELEMENTS BASED ON CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MALACCA SULTANATE SHOULD BE REVIVED TO HELP BRING THE VARIOUS RACES CLOSER TOGETHER SO THEIR DIFFERENCES WOULD BE MINIMISED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID NO ONE COULD DENY THAT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE VARIOUS RACES WAS NOW EASIER BECAUSE MANY PEOPLE WERE FLUENT IN THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE, PARTICULARLY THE YOUTH.

+WE HOPE AFTER ONE MORE GENERATION, THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE WILL BECOME THE MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION THAT IS TRULY EFFECTIVE AND SUPREME IN THE COUNTRY.+ -- MORE  
1809MST 01 08 88

D526

B E829 AAE  
MAHATHIR-IDENTITY 4 KUALA LUMPUR RRR

+BUT WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO CHECK THE RACIAL FEELINGS OF THE OLDER GENERATION FROM INFLUENCING THE ATTITUDE OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION OWING TO FEAR OF LOSING THEIR RACIAL IDENTITY,+ HE SAID.

THEY ALWAYS EMPHASISE ON THE DIFFERENCES OF THE RACES DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY AMONG THE YOUNGER GENERATION.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF ELIMINATING ANY RACE IN THIS COUNTRY AND THEY WERE FREE TO RETAIN THEIR IDENTITIES -- THEIR LANGUAGE, RELIGION AND CULTURE.

+HOWEVER, WHEN INDEPENDENCE WAS ATTAINED, WE HAD COME TO AN AGREEMENT TO ACCEPT THE OFFICIAL NAME OF THE COUNTRY AS MALAYSIA; OUR NATIONALITY AS MALAYSIANS AND OUR LANGUAGE AS BAHASA MALAYSIA,+ HE SAID.

ALL THESE WERE BASED ON THE NAME OF THE ORIGINAL AND MAJORITY INHABITANTS OF THIS COUNTRY, THE MALAYS, HE SAID. -- BERNAMA  
1837MST 01 08 88

0514

B E823 AAE  
MAHATHIR-IDENTITY 3 KUALA LUMPUR RRR

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0526

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MAHATHIR-IDENTITY 4 KUALA LUMPUR RRR

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