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MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 31 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA MAY SOON BE ABLE TO SEND ITS FIRST EXPEDITION TO THE ANTARCTIC, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE EXPEDITION TO THE +WHITE CONTINENT+ COULD COMPRISE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCHERS USING INEXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT, HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER LAUNCHING A KAYAK EXPEDITION AT TAMAN TASIK TITIWANGSA HERE.

HE DESCRIBED THE KAYAK EXPEDITION, REPRESENTING THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH STAGES OF A WIDER TRIP ALONG PENINSULAR MALAYSIA'S COASTLINE, AS A PRECURSOR TO THE ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.

MALAYSIA HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF EFFORTS TO MAKE ANTARCTICA THE COMMON HERITAGE OF ALL NATIONS AND NOT THE PRESERVE OF ONLY A FEW.

EARLIER, SENDING THE EXPEDITION ON ITS WAY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID GREATER EFFORTS WERE NEEDED TO MAKE MALAYSIANS MORE RESILIENT AND SELF-RELIANT. -- MORE

1822MST 31 01 88

B E412 AAE

MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID THE NATION NEEDED ITS PEOPLE TO BE COURAGEOUS IN FACING AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND NOT TO HOPE FOR HELP FROM OTHERS.

HE BELIEVED AN EXPEDITION SUCH AS TODAY'S, WHERE PARTICIPANTS HAD TO COPE WITH VARIOUS SITUATIONS AND TO MAKE SNAP DECISIONS, WOULD PROVIDE GOOD TRAINING FOR THE PEOPLE.

HE SAID ACTIVITIES WHICH REQUIRED A +PIONEERING SPIRIT+ INCLUDED MOUNTAIN CLIMBING AND JUNGLE TREKKING.

THEY ALSO GAVE MALAYSIANS OF ALL RACES AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET TOGETHER AND KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER.

LATER, IN ANSWER TO A REPORTER'S QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO HOME MINISTER, SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT SURE WHEN IT WOULD ISSUE A WHITE PAPER ON THE DETENTION OF 106 PEOPLE UNDER THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT ALTHOUGH HE INDICATED IT COULD BE IN FEBRUARY.

+(THE PAPER) IS BEING COMPLETED,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA
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