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KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 20 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA'S FUTURE LIES IN THE HANDS OF ITS PEOPLE AND IT IS LEFT TO THEM TO CHOOSE WHETHER THEY WANT THE COUNTRY TO BE PROGRESSIVE AND PEACEFUL OR OTHERWISE, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES ARE FORMULATED FOR THE GOOD OF THE PEOPLE AND NATION BUT THEIR SUCCESS DEPEND ON THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES, HE SAID.

THE VARIOUS RACES HELD EQUAL SAY IN DETERMINING WHETHER THEY WANTED TO SEE THE NATION CONTINUE TO DEVELOP, BE PEACEFUL AND BECOME A DEVELOPED COUNTRY, HE SAID BEFORE GIVING AWAY THE PRIZES AT THE UNITY BIG WALK HERE. HE HAD ALSO EARLIER FLAGGED OFF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE WALK NUMBERING ABOUT 7,000.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID RACIAL UNITY PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE ATTAINMENT OF NATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

+WITHOUT THIS UNITY, THE NATION CANNOT BE STABLE, DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS CANNOT PROCEED, FOREIGNERS WILL BE AFRAID TO INVEST HERE, AND THE COUNTRY WILL REGRESS WHILE THE RANKS OF THE UNEMPLOYED WILL SWELL,+ HE STRESSED. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIANS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE CULTURES OF ONE ANOTHER TO FURTHER ENHANCE RACIAL TOLERANCE, AND ENABLE THEM TO LIVE IN PEACE AS WELL AS WORK TOGETHER TO PUT MALAYSIA IN THE RANKS OF NEWLY INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES (NIC).

HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE MALAYSIA WOULD BE ABLE TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SUCH NICS AS SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN AND SINGAPORE IF THE PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD, AND WERE WILLING TO IMPLEMENT, GOVERNMENT POLICIES RELATING TO THIS MATTER.

ON THE WALK, HE SAID SUCH EVENTS INVOLVING THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL RACES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AND ORGANISED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SPOKE OF THE NEED FOR THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES TO REFRAIN FROM ADOPTING A +HOLIER THAN THOU+ ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS.

HE SAID PROBLEMS AND DIFFERENCES EXISTED EVEN IN A MONOETHNIC SOCIETY, AND IN SOME CASES HAD LED TO RIOTS AND CIVIL WAR. +IN ANY COMMUNAL GROUP, THERE ARE BOUND TO BE SOME BAD INDIVIDUALS, WHILE IN GROUPS REGARDED AS BAD THERE ARE GOOD PEOPLE,+ HE ADDED.

EARLIER, DEPUTY AGRICULTURE MINISTER DATUK ALEX LEE, ORGANISING CHAIRMAN OF THE EVENT, SAID IT WAS AIMED AT PROMOTING GREATER RACIAL UNITY, NEIGHBOURLINESS AND CLOSENESS AMONG THE RESIDENTS OF KUALA LUMPUR. -- BERNAMA

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