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MAHATHIR-FACTORY

PULAU PINANG, MAY 24 (BERNAMA) * DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY MALAYSIA WILL NOT BE EMBITTERED BY 'CRUDE ATTACKS OR NEGATIVE PUBLICITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA BUT WILL CONTINUE TO WELCOME FOREIGNERS AS INVESTORS OR TOURISTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER DESCRIBED THE NEGATIVE COMMENTS IN THE MEDIA AS JUST SO MUCH LIES BORNE OF ENVY AT THE ABILITY OF THIS COUNTRY TO PROSPER AND TO RECOVER UNDER ITS OWN STEAM.

OPENING THE \$35 MILLION BAXTER HEALTHCARE MALAYSIAN OPERATIONS FACTORY HERE, HE SAID MALAYSIA HAD BEEN RECEIVING A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF NEGATIVE PUBLICITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA, RANGING FROM ALLEGATIONS THAT DEMOCRACY WAS BEING THREATENED IN MALAYSIA TO DENOUNCEMENTS OF MALAYSIANS AS BARBARIANS.

+WE ARE HELPLESS TO DEFEND OURSELVES AS THOSE CONTROLLING THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA CARRY OUT A VERY EFFECTIVE CENSORSHIP WHICH DENIES US THE RIGHT TO GIVE OUR SIDE OF THE STORY,+ HE ADDED.

IN THIS CONTEXT, HE HOPED THAT FOREIGN COMPANIES AND MANUFACTURERS IN MALAYSIA WOULD HELP TO DISSEMINATE CORRECT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS COUNTRY AND THE OPPORTUNITIES IT OFFERED TO FOREIGN INVESTORS. -- MORE

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THEY SHOULD PASS ON THE FACT THAT MALAYSIA WAS SAFE AND STABLE AND EMINENTLY SUITED AS A PROFIT CENTRE FOR ALL KINDS OF MANUFACTURING ACTIVITIES, HE SAID.

BIG COMPANIES WHICH HAD INVESTED MILLIONS OF RINGGIT AND WERE EMPLOYING THOUSANDS OF WORKERS IN THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT PROOF TO THOSE WHO LOOKED TOWARDS MALAYSIA FOR NEW INVESTMENTS, HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, WOULD DO ITS UTMOST TO ENSURE THAT THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT OF THIS COUNTRY CONTINUED TO ENABLE COMPANIES TO MANUFACTURE, EXPAND AND MAKE PROFITS.

HE SAID MALAYSIA OFFERED ONE OF THE MOST VIABLE ENVIRONMENTS FOR OFFSHORE MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO HOPED THAT THOSE IN THE COUNTRY WHO HAD +POLITICAL JEALOUSY+ WOULD NOT SMEAR MALAYSIA'S IMAGE OVERSEAS WHICH COULD AFFECT THE INFLOW OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND TOURISTS. -- MORE

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NEGATIVE EFFORTS TO GIVE A BAD IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE STOPPED AS THIS WOULD AFFECT ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND GROWTH WHICH COULD CAUSE MORE UNEMPLOYMENT, HE ADDED.

+WE SHOULD PUT ASIDE PERSONAL INTERESTS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA

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