

U 5371 AAE

MAHATHIR-CONSULTATIONS 999

BH

KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 19 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT WILL ADOPT THE CONSULTATIONS APPROACH IN RESOLVING PROBLEMS FACED BY THE COUNTRY IF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL (NECC) INAUGURATED TODAY BRINGS GOOD RESULTS BENEFICIAL TO THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID IN A SPEECH AT THE LAUNCHING OF THE NECC HERE THAT THE APPROACH WAS A SINCERE GESTURE BY THE GOVERNMENT TO INVOLVE MORE PEOPLE IN THE PROCESS OF DETERMINING THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY.

THE SPEECH WAS READ OUT BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SHAFAR BABA.

THE NECC WAS ESTABLISHED TO DRAFT A NATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY TO SUCCEED THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) WHICH EXPIRES IN 1990. IT HAS 150 MEMBERS WITH A 50:50 BUMIPUTERA AND NON-BUMIPUTERA RATIO REPRESENTING ALL SECTORS INCLUDING THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, PROFESSIONAL, INTELLECTUAL, WORKER AND MANAGEMENT SECTORS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT DEEPLY REGRETTED THAT ITS LIBERAL MOVE IN SETTING UP THE NECC HAD BEEN POLITICISED BY CERTAIN GROUPS.

+THEY ARE TRYING TO LINK THE COMPOSITION OF THE NECC TO THEIR POLITICAL INTERESTS,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

1350HST 19 01 89

U 5376 AAE

MAHATHIR-CONSULTATIONS 2 KUALA LUMPUR 999

+THEY ARE TRYING TO GET SOMETHING FOR THEMSELVES BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE GOVERNMENT READINESS TO GIVE THEM THE CHANCE TO PLAY A MORE MEANINGFUL ROLE IN DETERMINING THE FUTURE AND FATE OF THE COUNTRY.

+THEY TRY TO GIVE A NEGATIVE PICTURE OF A GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE THAT EXCEEDS THE NORMAL PRACTICE OF DEMOCRACY,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT FEARED THAT IF THIS ATTITUDE AND STAND CONTINUED TO PREVAIL, THE NOBLE MOVE WOULD NOT ACHIEVE ITS AIMS.

SAYING THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT WILLING TO AND COULD NOT BE BLAMED IF THE EFFORT MET WITH FAILURE, HE URGED ALL QUARTERS, WHETHER IN THE NECC OR OUTSIDE IT, TO GIVE SERIOUS ATTENTION TO THIS +SPECIAL+ INITIATIVE.

+ACCEPT THIS APPROACH (CONSULTATIONS) AS A SINCERE ACT BY THE GOVERNMENT TO INVOLVE MORE PEOPLE IN THE PROCESS OF DETERMINING THE FATE OF THE COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

+IF THIS APPROACH YIELDS GOOD RESULTS AND BRINGS BENEFIT TO THE COUNTRY, IT CAN BE USED TO FACE VARIOUS OTHER PROBLEMS.

+BUT IF IT IS MADE USE OF TO SERVE POLITICAL OR CERTAIN OTHER INTERESTS, THEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COUNTRY WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ADOPT THIS WAY OF RESOLVING OTHER PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT ARISE FROM TIME TO TIME.+ -- MORE

1408HST 19 01 89

U 5380 AAE

MAHATHIR-CONSULTATIONS 3 KUALA LUMPUR 222

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE ECONOMIC POLICY FOR A COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY A MULTIRACIAL ONE LIKE MALAYSIA, WAS DIFFICULT TO DRAW UP BECAUSE ITS OBJECTIVES WOULD BE NOT JUST ECONOMIC, BUT INCORPORATE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ASPIRATIONS OF THE VARIOUS RACES HAVING THEIR OWN PROBLEMS AND INTERESTS.

AFTER FREEING THEMSELVES FROM THE YOKE OF COLONIALISM, A RACE OR COMMUNITY, WHETHER MALAY, CHINESE, INDIAN, KADAZAN OR IBAN, WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO BE COLONISED BY ANOTHER COMMUNITY.

THERE WAS NO COMMUNITY THAT WANTED TO REMAIN AS ONLY FARMERS, RUBBER TAPPERS OR TAXI DRIVERS, AND IN EVERY COMMUNITY, THERE WOULD BE PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO BECOME PROFESSIONALS, BUSINESSMEN AND ENTREPRENEURS, OFFICERS HOLDING HIGH POSTS OR JOIN THE RANKS OF THE AFFLUENT.

HE SAID IN LINE WITH THE WISH TO RETAIN THE IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL COUNTRY, MOTHER TONGUE AND CULTURE, EFFORTS NEEDED TO BE MADE TO ACHIEVE A BALANCE IN THE POSITION OF THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY.

WESTERN COUNTRIES WHICH OFTEN CRITICISED MALAYSIA FOR THE EMPHASIS ON ETHNIC ORIGIN WERE THEMSELVES VERY CAREFUL TO ENSURE THEIR CAUCASIAN ETHNIC DOMINATION WAS NOT THREATENED.

HE HOPED THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE NECC PROCEEDED SMOOTHLY AND ACHIEVE THE DESIRED SUCCESS. -- BERHANA

1433HST 19 01 89