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PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, JUNE 20 (BERNAMA) -- MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL (NECC) ARE DUTY-BOUND TO KEEP INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS OF THE MEETINGS SECRET AND NOT DISCLOSE THEM TO OTHERS, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

ALL NECC MEETINGS ARE CLOSED-DOOR SESSIONS TO GIVE MEMBERS A FREE AND OPEN MIND TO DISCUSS MATTERS, HE SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM ENCIK AHMAD OMAR (BN-PAGOH) IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT.

HE REMINDED NECC MEMBERS THAT SUCH REGULATIONS HAD BEEN AGREED TO AND STATED IN THE COUNCIL'S CONFERENCE PROCEDURES.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT INTERFERE IN THE COUNCIL'S WORK AND IT WAS UP TO THE MEMBERS TO FULFIL THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROVIDE NECC MEMBERS WITH INFORMATION THAT COULD BE GIVEN BUT THEY SHOULD NOT FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPLYING THE DATA AND INFORMATION REQUIRED. -- MORE
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TO A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION BY ENCIK LIM KIT SIANG (DAP-TANJUNG), DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT GIVE ALL THE INFORMATION NEEDED, ESPECIALLY SENSITIVE ONES, AS IT FEARED THIS COULD GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS.

IT WAS UP TO NECC MEMBERS TO GET THE REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BACK THEIR VIEWS AND IT WAS LEFT TO THE COUNCIL WHETHER TO ACCEPT THEM OR NOT, HE ADDED.

ON THE USE OF LANGUAGES OTHER THAN BAHASA MALAYSIA IN NECC PROCEEDINGS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE COUNCIL WAS BAHASA MALAYSIA.

+THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN INDEPENDENT FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS AND ITS PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MASTER BAHASA MALAYSIA,+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT SOME MEMBERS MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND IF OTHER LANGUAGES WERE USED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE NECC'S JURISDICTION INCLUDED STUDYING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) AND PROPOSING A POST-1990 ECONOMIC POLICY.

THE NECC HAD BEEN GIVEN ONE YEAR TO FINISH ITS WORK AND SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR CONSIDERATION AND FURTHER ACTION, HE ADDED. -- MORE
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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE COUNCIL WAS STILL AT THE FIRST STAGE OF ITS WORK IN STUDYING THE ASPECTS OF THE NEP AND HAD NOT YET ENCOUNTERED ANY PROBLEM.

THE NECC HAS HELD FIVE PLENARY SESSIONS AND SET UP FIVE COMMITTEES, INCLUDING COMMITTEES ON THE PERFORMANCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEP, POVERTY ERADICATION AND RESTRUCTURING OF SOCIETY, HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA
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