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MAHATHIR-JOURNAL
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KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 3 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY LAUNCHED THE FIRST ISSUE OF +DEWAN+, THE JOURNAL OF THE MALAYSIAN PARLIAMENT, FEATURING ACTIVITIES OF THE HOUSE.

SPEAKING AT THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY AT PARLIAMENT BUILDING, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE JOURNAL WOULD ENABLE THE PUBLIC TO FOLLOW DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF THE DEWAN RAKYAT AND THE DEWAN NEGARA.

AND AS REFERENCE MATERIAL, IT WILL ALSO BENEFIT FUTURE GENERATIONS, HE SAID, ADDING THAT THE EXISTING +HANSARD+ (OFFICIAL REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS) WAS TOO +DRY+.

+THIS JOURNAL CAN AT LEAST GIVE A MORE HUMAN ANGLE WITH ITS LIGHT ARTICLES,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER HOPED THAT THE JOURNAL COULD HELP UNEARTH TALENTED WRITERS FROM AMONG THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT SO THAT THEY COULD CONTRIBUTE SERIOUS AS WELL AS LIGHT STUFF.--MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MPS COULD WRITE NOT ONLY ON PARLIAMENT BUT ALSO THEIR EXPERIENCE SUCH AS ON OVERSEAS VISITS OR ATTENDING COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION MEETINGS, WHICH COULD HELP IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCE AS AN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID MPS SHOULD CREATE A HAPPY AND LIVELY ATMOSPHERE DURING ITS SITTINGS, BY INTERJECTING THEM WITH JOKES.

RECALLING PARLIAMENT'S EARLY DAYS SINCE HE FIRST BECAME AN MP IN 1964, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, +AT THAT TIME, THERE WAS A BAR WHERE MPS COULD REST+.

BUT, THE BAR AND THE +JOGET+ WERE DISCONTINUED IN 1972, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT AT THE MOMENT, THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO PLAN TO ALLOW A LIVE TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

AMONG THOSE PRESENT WERE THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, ENCIK GHAFAR BABA, SPEAKER OF THE DEWAN RAKYAT TAN SRI MOHAMAD ZAHIR ISMAIL, PRESIDENT OF THE DEWAN NEGARA TAN SRI ABANG AHMAD URAI AND GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS.

EARLIER, PARLIAMENT SECRETARY DATUK HAJI WAN ZAHIR SHEIK ABDUL RAHMAN, WHO IS ALSO THE JOURNAL'S ADVISOR, TOLD THE GATHERING THAT THERE WILL BE THREE ISSUES OF THE JOURNAL EACH YEAR, ONE AFTER EVERY SITTING.

THE 44-PAGE FIRST ISSUE CONTAINS AMONG OTHERS ARTICLES BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT DATUK DR ZAHARAH SULAIMAN AND PADANG TERAP MP DATUK DR AFFIFUDIN OMAR.--BERNAMA

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