

D528

U E747 AAE

MAHATHIR-PRESS (RPTN WITH CORRECTION TO FOURTH PARA)

BM

PETALING JAYA, FEB 22 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY SUGGESTED THAT THE LOCAL MEDIA STATION THEIR JOURNALISTS ABROAD TO PREVENT THE COLONISATION OF THOUGHTS THROUGH THE WESTERN MEDIA.

HE SAID BY BEING FED WITH NEWS FROM FOREIGN SOURCES, IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE VALUES, ATTITUDES AND VIEWS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY MIGHT BE EVENTUALLY AFFECTED.

+INDIRECTLY, WE WOULD SOMEWHAT FOLLOW THE WESTERN WAYS WHICH SURELY PLACE THEIR INTERESTS BEFORE OURS,+ HE SAID AT THE MALAYSIAN PRESS INSTITUTE (MPI) LUNCHEON AND AWARDS CEREMONY AT THE PETALING JAYA HILTON HERE.

HE SAID ALTHOUGH PHYSICAL COLONISATION HAD BEEN RID WITH THE GAINING OF INDEPENDENCE, THE PEOPLE WERE STILL COLONISED IN THEIR THINKING BECAUSE OF THE INFLUENCE EXERTED ON THE MEDIA BY THE WEST.

THE PRIME MINISTER, HOWEVER, STRESSED THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT FOREIGN NEWS ITEMS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES SHOULD BE DISREGARDED TOTALLY. -- MORE

1811MST 22 02 90

D490

U E732 AAE

MAHATHIR-PRESS 2 PETALING JAYA

HE SAID: +I ONLY HOPE THAT MORE LOCAL JOURNALISTS WILL WRITE ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES IN AN UNORTHODOX MANNER THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE WESTERN VIEWPOINT BUT STILL CONTAINING LOGIC AND CONCRETE AND ORIGINAL THOUGHTS.+

CITING POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN PLACES LIKE EASTERN EUROPE, HE SAID THE NEWS AND FEATURES AVAILABLE WERE WRITTEN BASED ON THE VIEWPOINTS OF FOREIGNERS WHOSE VALUES AND APPROACHES ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME AS THOSE OF MALAYSIANS.

HE SUGGESTED THAT LOCAL NEWSPAPERS WORK OUT A FORM OF COOPERATION TO STATION THEIR JOURNALISTS OVERSEAS BEARING IN MIND THAT THEY WILL FACE MANPOWER AND FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS IN DOING SO.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO REMINDED THE NEWSPAPERS THAT TAKING AN ADVERSARIAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE AN INDICATION OF THEIR CREDIBILITY.

+THIS DOES NOT MEAN NEWSPAPERS CANNOT CRITICISE THE GOVERNMENT, BUT IGNORING THE GOOD PURPORTEDLY JUST TO DEFEND FREEDOM AND CREDIBILITY, AND MAYBE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS, IS TO CONTRAVENE THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOM GIVEN TO THE NEWSPAPERS,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

1650MST 22 02 90

D503

U E736 AAE
MAHATHIR-PRESS 3 PETALING JAYA

HE ADVISED NEWSPAPERS NOT TO BE FANATICAL OVER THE QUESTION OF THE RIGHT TO KNOW BECAUSE AT TIMES IT WAS BETTER NOT TO CARRY CERTAIN NEWS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR EXPLAINED THAT A MINOR INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED IN A PLACE WITHIN A CERTAIN CONTEXT WOULD NOT BE CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE IF IT WAS LIMITED ONLY TO THAT PLACE.

HOWEVER, IF A MINOR THING WAS DISSEMINATED WIDELY WITH CERTAIN WORDS AND SENTENCES, AND AT TIMES TWISTED FOR SENSATIONALISM, A PROBLEM THAT WAS INITIALLY SMALL WOULD BECOME A MAJOR ISSUE, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ALL JOURNALISTS SHOULD BE HONEST AND FAIR AND CONSIDER WHETHER THE PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN NEWS ITEM WOULD BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY OR OTHERWISE.

+WHAT IS WRONG IF WE CHOOSE THE CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS OVER THE NEGATIVE ONES ALTHOUGH NEGATIVE NEWS IS APPARENTLY MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN THE GOOD NEWS?+ HE ASKED. -- MORE

1717MST 22 02 90

U E738 AAE
MAHATHIR-PRESS 4 PETALING JAYA

+WE ALWAYS CRITICISE TRADERS FOR BEING CONCERNED ONLY WITH PROFITS AT THE EXPENSE OF PUBLIC INTERESTS BUT BY GIVING PRIORITY TO NEWSPAPER SALES, ARE WE NOT BEING JUST AS GREEDY AS THEM?+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR LATER GAVE AWAY JOURNALISM AWARDS TO WINNERS IN THE VARIOUS CATEGORIES.

IN HIS SPEECH EARLIER, MPI CHAIRMAN HAJI MAZLAN NORDIN PRAISED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS SUPERB HANDLING OF THE RECENT LIVE SATELLITE INTERVIEW WHICH ALSO FEATURED PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT CORAZON AQUINO, PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BENAZIR BHUTTO, SOUTH KOREAN PRIME MINISTER KANG YOUNG HOON AND INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER INDER GUJRAL.

PRESENT AT TODAY'S CEREMONY WAS INFORMATION MINISTER DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT. -- BERNAMA
1719MST 22 02 90