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MAHATHIR - CHARLES R'R'R'

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 27<sup>90</sup> (BERNAMA) -- PRINCE CHARLES HAD NO INTENTION OF ACCUSING MALAYSIA OF GENOCIDE AGAINST THE PENANS OF SARAWAK AND IN FACT FOUND NO FAULT WITH THE COUNTRY'S FORESTRY POLICY.

BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER SIR NICHOLAS SPRECKLEY CONVEYED THIS TO DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD WHEN HE CALLED ON THE PRIME MINISTER TODAY TO EXPLAIN THE REMARKS MADE BY THE HEIR TO THE BRITISH THRONE THAT MALAYSIA WAS INVOLVED IN GENOCIDE AGAINST THE PENANS.

THE RECENT STATEMENT BY PRINCE CHARLES HAD HURT THE FEELINGS OF MALAYSIANS, PROMPTING UMNO YOUTH TO LODGE A PROTEST.

A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AFTER THE MEETING SAID SIR NICHOLAS INFORMED DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR THAT THE PRINCE WAS SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF ALONE WITHOUT ADVICE FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE PRINCE DOES NOT HAVE A CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION.

SIR NICHOLAS INDICATED THAT THE REFERENCE TO +GENOCIDE+ DID NOT REFLECT THE VIEW OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. -- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-CHARLES 2 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'

INDEED BRITISH PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER HAD HERSELF WRITTEN TO DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR CONGRATULATING HIM ON HIS RECENT SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE ASEAN-EC MEETING IN KUCHING, THE STATEMENT SAID.

IN THAT SPEECH, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD REAFFIRMED MALAYSIA'S APPROACH TO FOREST MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION AND THAT IT IS THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO BRING THE PENANS INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF MALAYSIAN LIFE.

SIR NICHOLAS INFORMED THE PRIME MINISTER THAT PRINCE CHARLES HAD INSTRUCTED HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO EXPLAIN TO AN UMNO YOUTH DELEGATION THAT VISITED LONDON EARLIER THIS MONTH THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF ACCUSING MALAYSIA OF GENOCIDE AND THAT HE HAD FOUND NO FAULT WITH MALAYSIA'S FORESTRY POLICY.

THE PRINCE REGRETTED VERY MUCH THAT HIS STATEMENT HAD CAUSED OFFENCE TO MALAYSIA.

THE STATEMENT SAID DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IN THE INTEREST OF GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND MALAYSIA, THERE SHOULD BE NO FUTURE OCCASIONS WHEN REMARKS OF SUCH A NATURE ARE MADE. -- BERNAMA  
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