

R E797 AAE

MAHATHIR-COMMONWEALTH R'R'R'R'

BM

KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 15⁹⁰ (BERNAMA) -- THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL WILL SEND A REPRESENTATIVE HERE SOON TO MAKE A PRELIMINARY STUDY BEFORE THE SETTING UP A GROUP TO OBSERVE THE COUNTRY'S NEXT GENERAL ELECTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE REPRESENTATIVE WOULD MEET THE ELECTION COMMISSION AND POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH WILL CONTEST IN THE ELECTION, THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD REPORTERS AFTER ABOUT 200 ORANG ASLI LEADERS CALLED ON HIM AT HIS RESIDENCE, SERI PERDANA, HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE VISIT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE WAS PROPOSED BY THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL IN A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION HE HAD WITH HIM THREE DAYS AGO AND THAT HE (THE PRIME MINISTER) HAD AGREED TO THE PROPOSAL.

HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN THE REPRESENTATIVE WOULD ARRIVE.

+THEY NEED TO KNOW THE SITUATION HERE BEFORE MAKING THE PREPARATIONS. WE HAD ONLY REQUESTED (FOR A COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER GROUP) ... WE DID NOT SET CONDITIONS, HE SAID. -- MORE

1935MST 15 07 90

MAHATHIR-COMMONWEALTH 2 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'R'

THE PRIME MINISTER HAD SAID EARLIER THAT THE GOVERNMENT REQUESTED FOR A COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER GROUP BECAUSE IT HAD COME TO ITS NOTICE THAT THE OPPOSITION WANTED TO UNDERMINE THE ELECTION.

EARLIER, SPEAKING TO THE ORANG ASLI LEADERS, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NEVER IGNORED THE ORANG ASLI BUT HAD GIVEN THEM ATTENTION SIMILAR TO THAT GIVEN TO THE OTHER COMMUNITIES.

+THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO SEE THE ORANG ASLI DEVELOP TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER COMMUNITIES,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE SUCCESS ATTAINED BY CHILDREN OF THE ORANG ASLI IN VARIOUS FIELDS, INCLUDING EDUCATION, PROVED THAT THE ORANG ASLI ALSO HAD CAPABILITIES.

HE SAID THAT IN THEIR QUEST FOR PROGRESS, THE ORANG ASLI SHOULD NOT IGNORE THEIR CULTURE, AND SKILLS SUCH AS CARVING, TRAPPING OF ANIMALS AND USING THE BLOWPIPE. -- MORE

1940MST 15 07 90

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R E800 AAE

MAHATHIR-COMMONWEALTH 3 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'R'

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD SET UP A COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON ORANG ASLI AFFAIRS CHAIRED BY HOME MINISTRY SECRETARY-GENERAL DATUK ZAINOL MAHMOOD TO LOOK INTO PROBLEMS FACED BY THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING LOGGING WHICH WAS SAID TO HAVE AFFECTED THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

IT WAS DIFFICULT TO CHECK LOGGING ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ENSURE THAT THE INDUSTRY DID NOT POSE A PROBLEM TO THE ORANG ASLI BUT BENEFITED THEM INSTEAD, HE SAID.

HE GAVE AN ASSURANCE THAT HE WOULD ASK THE STATE GOVERNMENTS TO GIVE MORE SERIOUS ATTENTION TO THE MATTER.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ADVISED THE ORANG ASLI NOT TO BE INFLUENCED BY PROPAGANDA BY CERTAIN GROUPS WHICH INFLUENCED THEM TO OPPOSE THE GOVERNMENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED THAT THE ALLOWANCES FOR ORANG ASLI COMMUNITY LEADERS (BATIN) WOULD BE INCREASED BUT THE AMOUNT WOULD BE ANNOUNCED LATER. -- MORE

1946MST 15 07 90

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MAHATHIR-COMMONWEALTH 4 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'R'

ON THE APPOINTMENT OF A SUCCESSOR TO ORANG ASLI SENATOR HASSAN NAM, WHOSE TERM OF OFFICE ENDED RECENTLY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF ORANG ASLI AFFAIRS.

ON A GERAKAN PROPOSAL THAT THE ORANG ASLI BE REPRESENTED BY THREE SENATORS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS AGREEABLE TO THE PROPOSAL PROVIDED THERE WERE SENATORS WHO WERE PREPARED TO MAKE WAY FOR THEM.

+IF WE WANT TO HAVE THREE ORANG ASLI SENATORS, WE HAVE TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF THE OTHER SENATORS. IF THERE ARE OTHERS WHO ARE PREPARED TO MAKE WAY, I FULLY AGREE (TO THE PROPOSAL),+ HE SAID.

IN HIS SPEECH ON BEHALF OF THE ORANG ASLI, MENTERI SILEH BIN GANCHOR OF PAHANG SAID THE ORANG ASLI PLEDGED TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT EFFORTS AND TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES.

HE SAID THE COMMUNITY WAS CONFIDENT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WOULD ENSURE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE ORANG ASLI. -- MORE

R E805 AAE
MAHATHIR-COMMONWEALTH 5 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'R'

THE ORANG ASLI LEADERS PRESENTED DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AND DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH MOHAMED ALI WITH NUMEROUS GIFTS, INCLUDING FOUR MOUSEDEER, DURIANS, PETAI AND HANDICRAFT.

IN RETURN, DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH, WHO IS PRESIDENT OF BAKTI, THE ASSOCIATION OF WIVES OF MINISTERS AND DEPUTY MINISTERS, PRESENTED A TELEVISION SET AND A VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER FOR THE ORANG ASLI HOSPITAL IN GOMBAK.

SHE SAID BAKTI WOULD ALSO PROVIDE 10 SCHOLARSHIPS TO ORANG ASLI PUPILS TO ENABLE THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR STUDIES UP TO THE TERTIARY LEVEL.

DEPUTY HOME MINISTER DATUK MEGAT JUNID MEGAT AYUB AND ORANG ASLI AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR-GENERAL ENCIK JIMIN IDRIS WERE AMONG THOSE PRESENT AT THE FUNCTION. -- BERNAMA
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