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CONGRESS OF MALAY INTELLECTUALS HAILS PM'S NEW ZEALAND SPEECH

KUALA LUMPUR, March 28 (Bernama) -- The Congress of Malay Intellectuals (KCM) today lauded the speech made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in New Zealand explaining the position of the Malays.

KCM secretary Prof Datuk Dr Wan Hashim Wan Teh said in a statement here today that since time immemorial, some scholars from the eastern and western nations had had little regard for and looked down on the Malay race.

He was commenting on the prime minister's speech at the launch of the Malay Studies Chair in Victoria University, New Zealand, yesterday which was aimed, among other things, at dispelling any misunderstanding on the race, especially by the international community.

Prof Dr Wan Hashim said many people failed to realise that the Malay civilisation started with the Malay governments in the Indo-Chinese peninsula and along the eastern shores of the Malay archipelago like the Indo-Kuno Champa, Funan and Langkasuka governments in the early centuries.

He said that before the coming of the Portuguese, Dutch and British colonialists in the early 18th Century the Malays were strong in many fields but they were later weakened by the "fraud diplomacy" of the colonialists.

However, he said, after Malaysia gained independence, the achievements of the Malays in many fields had commanded the respect of both the developing nations and the western world. -- Bernama

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