

NO30 (F)
MAHATHIR - FORESTS

KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 23 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO AMEND THE FORESTRY LAWS TO BRING STATE-CONTROLLED PERMANENT FOREST RESERVES UNDER THE CONTROL OF A CENTRALISED BODY.

DDEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED SAID A MEMORANDUM ON THIS PROPOSAL HAD BEEN SENT TO THE VARIOUS STATES FOR THEIR VIEWS.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING A MEETING OF THE NATIONAL FORESTRY COUNCIL AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE HERE TODAY, HE SAID WORK TO STANDARDISE THE LAWS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNCIL.

THE COUNCIL WOULD ALSO DETERMINE THE AREAS TO BE DESIGNATED AS PERMANENT FOREST RESERVES, HE ADDED.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS NECESSARY FOR A CENTRALISED BODY TO DESIGNATE SUCH AREAS AS THE ACTION OF ANY STATE TO CONVERT FOREST RESERVES TO AGRICULTURAL LAND WOULD ALTER THE NATIONAL PICTURE. -- BERNAMA MORE 1410/YF

££

NO31 (F)
MAHATHIR - FORESTS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

+IN SUCH A SITUATION, WE CANNOT WAIT FOR THE NATIONAL FORESTRY COUNCIL TO MEET TO BE CONSULTED ON THIS MATTER,+ HE SAID.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GENERAL RULE ON HOW THE COUNCIL WOULD EFFECT ITS AUTHORITY HAD NOT BEEN DECIDED YET.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES IN THE FORESTRY LAWS OF THE VARIOUS STATES.

ON THE SILVICULTURE CESS FUND, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THOUGH IT WAS COLLECTED BY THE STATES, + THE FUND HAD TO BE UTILISED FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES, INCLUDING REFORESTATION. -- BERNAMA MORE 1413/YF

NO41: (F)
MAHATHIR-FORESTS 3 KUALA LUMPUR

WHILE OPENING THE COUNCIL MEETING EARLIER, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT A TOTAL OF 12,765,920 ACRES OF FORESTS IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA HAD BEEN DESIGNATED AS PERMANENT FOREST RESERVES.

HE ADDED IT WAS HOPED ALL STATE GOVERNMENTS WOULD DECLARE THE AREAS AS PERMANENT FOREST RESERVES.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE PERMANENT FOREST RESERVES WOULD BECOME NATURAL RESOURCES THAT COULD HELP TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SOURCES.

THEY COULD ALSO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN AND ANIMAL LIFE, CHECK AIR POLLUTION AND ENSURE A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE GENERATIONS, HE ADDED.

TOUCHING ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR TIMBER INDUSTRY WORKERS, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT EXPAND THE LOGGING TRAINING CENTRE IN TRENGGANU. -- BERNAMA MORE 1457/LK

EE

NO 42: (F)

MAHATHIR-FORESTS 4 KUALA LUMPUR

HE HOPED SIMILAR CENTRES COULD BE SET UP IN PERAK AND JOHORE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

DR. MAHATHIR CALLED FOR CLOSER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE STATE GOVERNMENTS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO BUILD A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY.

HE SAID THAT HITHERTO FORESTRY HAD CONCENTRATED ONLY ON EFFORTS FOR PRODUCTION AND NEGLECTED EFFORTS TO RE-DEVELOP THE RESOURCES.

SUCH A SITUATION WAS REGRETTABLE AND IF POSITIVE STEPS WERE NOT TAKEN AND THERE WAS NO CLOSE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THOSE INVOLVED, FORESTRY IN THIS COUNTRY WOULD FACE A BLEAK FUTURE, HE SAID.

DR. MAHATHIR ADDED THE COUNTRY MUST TAKE POSITIVE STEPS TO SAFEGUARD FORESTRY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION'S ECONOMY. --
BERNAMA 1500/LK