

MAHATHIR
BM

P

28
SEREMBAN, APRIL 1 (BERNAMA) — DATUK SERI DR. (MAHATHIR MOHAMED) ADVISED STATE GOVERNMENTS TODAY TO CUT DOWN ON THE ALLOCATION OF LOGGING CONCESSIONS TO PREVENT A DEPLETION OF TIMBER IN THE FUTURE.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TOLD REPORTERS HERE THAT IF LOGGING WAS NOT CONTROLLED, THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT FORESTRY RESOURCES, SECOND IN IMPORTANCE TO RUBBER IN THE COUNTRY, WOULD BE EXHAUSTED IN 12 YEARS' TIME.

HE SAID THIS AFTER OPENING THE BIENNIAL DELEGATES' CONFERENCE OF THE MALAY FORESTRY OFFICERS UNION OF WEST MALAYSIA AT THE RAJA MELAWAR TEACHERS COLLEGE AT SIKAMAT NEAR HERE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COULD ONLY GIVE ADVICE IN THE MATTER AS FORESTRY WAS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE GOVERNMENTS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE AID TO STATE GOVERNMENTS IN REPLANTING AND REHABILITATION OF LOGGED-OUT AREAS. —BERNAMA MORE 1040/BY

EE

NO72 (F)
MAHATHIR 2 SEREMBAN

ON THE DROUGHT IN KEDAH, HE SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDED BETWEEN \$15 MILLION AND \$20 MILLION TO HELP 240,000 FARMING FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE PROTRACTED DRY SPELL.

A FURTHER \$2 MILLION WERE ALLOCATED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL DIVISION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE TO OVERSEE THE ANNUAL CLOUD-SEEDING PROGRAMME TO MAKE ARTIFICIAL RAIN WHICH STARTED LAST YEAR.

HE SAID A DELEGATION REPRESENTING PADI PLANTERS IN KEDAH HAD A MEETING WITH HIM YESTERDAY TO DISCUSS THE DROUGHT PROBLEM. HE ADDED THE GOVERNMENT WAS ARRANGING THE NECESSARY ASSISTANCE FOR THE AFFECTED FARMERS.

EARLIER, IN OPENING THE CONFERENCE, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR PLEDGED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD STUDY ALL CHALIMS MADE BY WORKERS AND FIND WAYS OF OVERCOMING THEIR PROBLEMS TO THEIR SATISFACTION. —BERNAMA MORE 1900/BY

MAHATHIR 3 SEREMBAN

HE REMINDED THEM HOWEVER THAT ALTHOUGH THE COUNTRY'S FINANCES WERE NOW ON A VERY STRONG FOOTING, THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT USE THE FUNDS INDISCRIMINATELY IN MEETING ALL DEMANDS WITHOUT REGARD AS TO THEIR REASONABLENESS.

EVERY WORKER HAD THE DUTY OF HELPING THE GOVERNMENT MAINTAIN THE COUNTRY'S STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION BY BEING REASONABLE IN THEIR DEMANDS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR LATER PRESENTED GOLD MEDALS TO FOUR TRADE UNION LEADERS FOR THEIR SERVICES AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE SUCCESS OF TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRY.

THEY ARE THE PRESIDENT OF THE MALAY FORESTRY OFFICERS UNION OF WEST MALAYSIA, ENCIK SHAMSUDDIN BIN MOHAMED ISA, CHAIRMAN OF THE UNION'S PERAK BRANCH, ENCIK MOHAMED NOOR BIN IBRAHIM CHAIRMAN OF THE UNION'S MALACCA BRANCH, HAJI HAMDAN BIN MOHAMED SHAH AND THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF CUEPACS, ENCIK YAHYA ALI. —BERNAMA MORE 1903/BY

MAHATHIR 4 SEREMBAN

EARLIER, THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FORESTRY (PENINSULAR MALAYSIA), ENCIK MUHAMMAD JAMIL, SAID THAT OF THE 917,000 ACRES OF FOREST LAND THAT HAD BEEN LOGGED YEARLY SINCE 1971 ONLY 10 PER CENT HAD BEEN REAFFORESTED.

HE URGED STATE GOVERNMENTS TO REDUCE THE TOTAL AREA UNDER LOGGING ANNUALLY TO 340,000 ACRES FROM THE PRESENT 900,000 ACRES.

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD INTRODUCE REAFFORESTATION PROGRAMMES TO ENSURE FUTURE SUPPLY OF TIMBER.

EARLIER MUHAMMAD SAID THAT PENINSULAR MALAYSIA PRODUCED 334 MILLION CUBIC FEET OF TIMBER WORTH \$142 MILLION LAST YEAR.

THE MENTERI BESAR, DATUK MANSOR OSMAN, WAS PRESENT AT THE OPENING CEREMONY. -- BERNAMA 1927/ZCM