

MAHATHIR-PADI
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78
ALOR STAR, JULY 4 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT IS STUDYING A NEW PRICING SYSTEM TO INCREASE PADI PRICE WITHOUT INCREASING THE PRICE OF RICE IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE INCOMES OF FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT THE SYSTEM, IF IMPLEMENTED, WOULD GIVE GREATER BENEFITS TO CONSUMERS AS WELL AS PRODUCERS, PARTICULARLY THE FARMERS.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALWAYS GIVING ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEMS FACED BY FARMERS INVOLVED IN THE RICE INDUSTRY.

HE WAS OPENING THE \$4.5 MILLION PADI DRYING AND PROCESSING COMPLEX OF THE NATIONAL RICE AND PADI AUTHORITY IN JERLUN, ABOUT 14 MILES FROM HERE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE NEW PRICING SYSTEM COULD ONLY BE IMPLEMENTED IF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WAS GIVEN A FRESH MANDATE TO RULE BY THE PEOPLE.

AS SUCH THE ROLE OF THE PEOPLE IN THE COMING ELECTION WAS IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING THAT A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO BE IN POWER TO BRING PROSPERITY AND PROGRESS TO THE NATION.

--BERNAMA MORE 1630/BY

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HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT FROM NEXT YEAR PILGRIMS BOUND FOR JEDDAH COULD ALSO BOARD THEIR FLIGHTS FROM THE PENANG AIRPORT.

THIS FACILITY WAS EXTENDED TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS FACED BY PILGRIMS WHO HAD TO GO TO KUALA LUMPUR TO TAKE THEIR FLIGHTS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD IMPLEMENTED VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AS WELL AS PROGRAMMES FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.

+IT IS NOT TRUE AS CLAIMED BY CERTAIN GROUPS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NEGLECTED SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PEOPLE+, HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE GROUPS HAD IRRESPONSIBLY ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF NOT GIVING ATTENTION TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF THE RURAL PEOPLE.

HE REMINDED THE PEOPLE NOT TO BE TAKEN IN BY SUCH ALLEGATIONS.

EARLIER, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL PADI AND RICE AUTHORITY, DATUK MOHAMED SOPIEE SHEIKH IBRAHIM, SAID THAT ABOUT 30 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL PADI LAND IN KEDAH WAS PLANTED WITH DOUBLE CROPPING.

THE ESTIMATED PADI OUTPUT FROM THE STATE TOTALLED ABOUT 400,000 TONS PER SEASON.

ALSO PRESENT WERE MENTRI BESAR DATUK SERI SYED AHMAD SHAHABUDDIN PERLIS MENTRI BESAR DATUK HAJI JAAFAR HASSAN AND DEPUTY PUBLIC ENTERPRISES MINISTER DATUK MUSTAPHA JABAR. --BERNAMA 1633/BY