

PARLIAMENT-MURUT
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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT. 25⁶ (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN VARIOUS MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE LOT OF THE POOR IN SABAH, INCLUDING THE MURUT.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER /DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD/ SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF THE ECONOMIC BACKWARDNESS OF THE MURUT AND OTHER BUMIPUTRA ETHNIC GROUPS IN SABAH'S INTERIOR AREAS.

HOWEVER, THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WERE NOT MEANT TO BENEFIT ONLY CERTAIN GROUPS, BUT WERE DIRECTED AT ALL THE POOR IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR RACE, HE TOLD DATUK STEPHEN EVANS (BN-KENINGAU) IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT TODAY.

IN DRAWING UP STRATEGIES TO ERADICATE POVERTY, THE MURUT WHO WERE INCLUDED IN THE POVERTY GROUP ALSO BENEFITTED, HE SAID. -- BERNAMA MORE 1720/YF

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT AMONG THE STEPS TAKEN TO UPLIFT THE POSITION OF THE POOR IN SABAH WERE:

- + RESETTLING OF FARMERS ON NEW LAND SCHEMES;
- + REHABILITATION OF THEIR LAND THROUGH THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATIVE TO IMPROVE INCOME;
- + LAUNCHING OF ECONOMIC PROJECTS FOR THE CULTIVATION OF CROPS FOR SALE;
- + PROVISION OF TRAINING FACILITIES FOR YOUTHS IN MODERN FARMING METHODS AND COMMERCIALISED FARMING; AND
- + EXTENDING THE RURAL CREDIT SCHEME TO SMALLHOLDERS TO INCREASE PRODUCTION. -- BERNAMA MORE 1725/YF

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE PROCESS OF CHANGE WAS A SLOW ONE BECAUSE OF A HOST OF PROBLEMS INCLUDING POOR COMMUNICATION NETWORK, DIFFICULTY IN DISCARDING OUTDATED ATTITUDES AND OTHER HUMAN FACTORS.

NEVERTHELESS, EVERYTHING WAS BEING DONE TO SPEED UP THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN SABAH'S INTERIOR, HE SAID.

HE BELIEVED THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAD APPOINTED A SENIOR OFFICER TO COORDINATE THE PROGRAMME. -- BERNAMA 1728/YF