

NO97:

MAHATHIR-INTERVIEW

SEOUL, OCT. 7 (BERNAMA) — MALAYSIA WILL SEND OFFICERS TO SOUTH KOREA TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF ADOPTING ITS FARMING METHODS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE EFFORT TO ORGANISE THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD DISCLOSED HERE TODAY.

IN AN INTERVIEW, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS VERY IMPRESSED HOW THE SMALL FARMERS IN KOREA WERE BEING ORGANISED INTO AN EFFICIENT PRODUCTION FORCE CAPABLE OF GENERATING HIGH INCOME.

HE ADDED: +THEIR SMALLHOLDINGS HAVE BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL THAT RURAL INCOME IN KOREA IS MUCH HIGHER THAN URBAN INCOME THROUGH COOPERATIVE FARMING AND INTRODUCTION OF SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES.

+WE NEED TO ORGANISE OUR TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE SECTOR ALONG THIS LINE+.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ON A SIX-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, SAID HE DID NOT FORESEE MUCH PROBLEM IN TRYING TO INTRODUCE THE KOREAN METHOD OF FARMING WHICH THEY FIRST LEARNT FROM MALAYSIA WHEN THE LATE PRESIDENT CHUNG HEE PARK VISITED MALAYSIA SOME YEARS AGO.

IN KOREA THIS IS CALLED +SAEMAUL UNDONG+ IN WHICH FARMERS ARE GROUPED TOGETHER TO SMALL VILLAGES AND AMALGAMATE THEIR PLOTS INTO BIGGER HOLDINGS FOR EASY CULTIVATION.

THEY ALSO ENGAGE IN SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES TO BOOST THEIR INCOME.

—BERNAMA MORE 1935/1F

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IN FACT, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID, GROUP FARMING BY SIMILAR METHODS HAD ALREADY BEEN TRIED IN ASSAM JAWA, KEDAH, IN WHICH SMALLHOLDINGS WERE AMALGAMATED TO ENABLE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MECHANISED FARMING.

+IF THIS COMES THROUGH, IT WOULD MEAN A BETTER LIFE FOR OUR FARMERS+, HE SAID.

WITH GOVERNMENT HELP SMALL FARMERS CAN BE ORGANISED INTO GROUPS OF EFFICIENT FARMING COMMUNITIES SO THAT IT WOULD BE EASY TO SUPPLY THEM WITH BASIC AMENITIES, HE ADDED.

BUT, IF THEY PREFERRED TO BE ISOLATED FROM ONE ANOTHER, THEN IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO HELP THEM, HE POINTED OUT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO DISCLOSED THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP IN KOREA WAS VERY KEEN TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED WITH MALAYSIA, ESPECIALLY IN DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH THEM HE NOTED THEIR REAL DESIRE TO FORGE A STRONG RELATIONSHIP IN THESE FIELDS.

THIS AFTERNOON, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR PAID A COURTESY CALL ON THE KOREAN PRIME MINISTER ENCIK NAM DUCK WOO. — BERNAMA