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ALOR STAR, FEB. 28 (BERNAMA) — ACTING PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY THE KEDAH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY WAS SET UP TO ASSIST THE STATE'S IMPLEMENTATION MACHINERY FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

THE BOARD WILL SERVE AS THE CENTRE FOR PLANING, BUDGET CONTROL MONITORING AND STUDY ON THE MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES AT STATE LEVEL.

LAUNCHING THE BOARD AT WISMA NEGERI HERE, DATUK SERI DR. MAHADHIR SAID THE PERFORMANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT MACHINERY IN KEDAH UNDER THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN WAS GENERALLY NOT SATISFACTORY.

STATISTICS SHOWED THAT AT THE END OF 1979, KEDAH ONLY USED 58 PER CENT OF THE \$1.2 BILLION ALLOCATED UNDER THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN.

ACCORDING TO HIM, THIS PERFORMANCE PUT THE STATE AMONG THE UNDEVELOPED GROUP OF STATES IN THE COUNTRY. —BERNAMA MORE 1920/AM

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THE REASONS FOR THE LOW PERFORMANCE WERE THE LACK OF COMPETENT TECHNICAL PERSONNEL, LACK OF CONTRACTORS, POOR INVESTMENT CLIMATE AND OUTDATED PROCEDURES.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID A DIFFICULTY NOW WAS THE RECRUITMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL.

HE SAID THE SETTING UP OF THE BOARD WOULD OVERCOME THIS PROBLEM AS PROFESSIONALS FROM ABROAD WOULD BE CONTRACTED.

THE BOARD WILL ALSO SET UP A SYSTEM FOR CO-ORDINATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS CARRIED OUT BY THE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.

THIS SYSTEM WOULD NOT REPLACE OR DIMINISH THE RESPECTIVE ROLES OF THE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, HE STRESSED. —BERNAMA MORE 1925/AM

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ON PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT, THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER SAID POLITICIANS AT STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL MUST CO-OPERATE TO HELP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO IMPLEMENT THEIR TASKS.

GOVERNMENT OFFICERS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE WHICH THEIR REPRESENTATIVES BRING UP FROM TIME TO TIME IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY OR IN PARLIAMENT.

ON THE MUDA IRRIGATION SCHEME, HE SAID THE PEOPLE IN THE MUDA AREA HAVE AND WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE FACILITIES TO ASSIST THEM IN AGRICULTURE, MARKETING AND PROCESSING.

THE RESULT HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN THEIR EARNINGS LAST YEAR TO BETWEEN \$3,810 AND \$4,760 PER ANNUM PER FAMILY AGAINST AN ANNUAL EARNING OF BETWEEN \$2,150 AND \$3,360 PER FAMILY OUTSIDE THE MUDA AREA. —BERNAMA MORE 1930/1B

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THIS GAP IN INCOME WOULD FURTHER WIDEN IF SOMETHING RADICAL WAS NOT DONE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION MACHINERY FOR PROJECTS OUTSIDE THE MUDA AREA.

MENTRI BESAR DATUK SERI YYED NAHAR SHAHABUDDIN, WHO WAS APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, SAID IT WOULD COMBINE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH THOSE OF INDUSTRIES, TRADE AND SERVICES IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER.

MANY JOB OPPORTUNITIES WOULD BE CREATED WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE STATE'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, HE ADDED.

HE ALSO SAID THAT WITH THE SETTING UP OF THE BOARD, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO IMMEDIATELY CHANNEL RESOURCES NEEDED TO IN THE UNDEVELOPED AREAS OF KEDAH AND TO CO-ORDINATE THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT. — BERNAMA 1935/1B