

MAHATHIR - FARMERS

BM

82 (P)
MELAKA, DEC. 18 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT HE WANTED TO SEE FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES BY PRACTISING MODERN AGRICULTURE METHODS TO IMPROVE THEIR STANDARD OF LIVING AND INCOMES.

HE SAID THE PRACTICE OF MODERN AGRICULTURE METHODS BASED ON ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY WAS IN LINE WITH GOVERNMENT'S AIM OF HAVING THE NATION'S DEVELOPMENT SHARED BY THE RURAL COMMUNITY.

+THE FARMERS SHOULD BE NOT MERELY SATISFIED WITH THEIR TRADITIONAL METHODS OF AGRICULTURE,+ HE ADDED WHEN HE LAUNCHED THE SYARIKAT PEMBANGUNAN PERTANIAN HERE TODAY.

THE COMPANY WAS SET UP TO DEVELOP 170 HECTARES OF IDLE LAND IN KUALA SUNGAI BARU IN THE ALOR GAJAH DISTRICT, ABOUT 50 KM FROM HERE.

+THE TIME HAS ADVANCED FROM A STAGE WHERE BUFFALOES ARE REPLACED MACHINERY TO PLOUGH THE FIELD TO ENSURE A BETTER INCOME FOR THE FARMERS,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE 1648/II

ZCZC ND87 (F)

MAHATHIR - FARMERS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS CERTAIN THAT FARMERS OF TODAY NO LONGER WANT 'TO LIVE FROM HAND TO MOUTH'. BUT, HE ADDED, THE FARMERS WOULD NOT HAVE A BETTER LIFE IF THEY DID NOT SEEK MORE EFFECTIVE AGRICULTURE METHODS.

'THERE ARE SOME WHO FELT THAT IT IS NOT PRACTICAL TO USE MODERN MACHINERY IN OUR PADI FIELDS BUT I FEEL THAT THE MACHINERY CAN BE USED COLLECTIVELY BY THE FARMERS WITH BIG ACREAGE,' HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE CULTIVATION OF PADI ON A COLLECTIVE BASIS HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY TRIED OUT IN ABAM JAWA, KEDAH, WHERE THE FARMERS HAD USED THEIR OWN MACHINERY.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT SIMILAR PROJECTS COULD BE CARRIED OUT IN OTHER AREAS IF THE FARMERS WERE PREPARED TO COOPERATE AND TO RECEIVE WAGES AND ALLOWANCE, BASED ON THE SIZE OF THE ACREAGE THEY WORKED ON. -- MORE 1700/MB

MAHATHIR-FARMERS 3 MELAKA

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE MANY OTHER MODERN AGRICULTURAL METHODS BUT UNLESS THE FARMERS WERE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE NECESSARY CHANGES, THEY WOULD BE LEFT BEHIND BY THE WORLD.

HE STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO PLACE FOR FARMERS WHO WERE LAZY, ESPECIALLY IF THEIR CROPS REQUIRED CONSTANT ATTENTION AND CARE.

+ I AM ALSO SURE THAT FARMERS IN THIS COUNTRY COULD BE SUCCESSFUL IF THEY WOULD ALSO CULTIVATE OTHER CROPS THAT COULD MORE THAN DOUBLE THEIR INCOMES THAN IF THEY WERE JUST TO PLANT PADI ALONE.

THE PRIME MINISTER LATER PRESENTED PRIZES TO WINNERS OF AN INTER-KAMPUNG COMPETITION AND +THE VISIT AND TRAINING SYSTEM OF FARMING+.

--BERNAMA 1715/AN