

MAHATHIR - ALLOCATION

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KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 28 (BERNAMA) -- (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE GOVERNMENT WILL SAVE ABOUT \$30.8 MILLION ANNUALLY FOLLOWING ITS DECISION TO STOP THE YEARLY \$200,000 ALLOCATION TO THE COUNTRY'S 154 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE DECISION WAS MADE AS PART OF THE NATION'S CUTBACK ON EXPENDITURES.

+WE HAVE NO MONEY NOW SO WE DON'T GIVE OUT,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS HERE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HOWEVER EXPLAINED THAT CONTRARY TO POPULAR MISCONCEPTION, THE ALLOCATIONS WERE NOT GIVEN TO THE MPS.

INSTEAD, THEY WERE ALLOCATED TO THE VARIOUS DISTRICT OFFICES TO BE DISBURSED ACCORDING TO THE WISHES OF THE RAKYAT AS EXPRESSED THROUGH THEIR MPS, HE SAID. -- MORE 2159/MK

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ZCZC N191 (F/S)

MAHATHIR - ALLOCATION 2 KUALA LUMPUR

ASKED WHETHER THE STATE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD EMULATE THE MOVE BY STOPPING SIMILAR ALLOCATIONS TO STATE ASSEMBLYMEN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT WAS UP TO THE STATES TO MAKE THAT DECISION.

+AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED, WE WANT TO CUT DOWN ON EXPENSES.

+WE HAVE POSTPONED A NUMBER OF BIG PROJECTS, CLOSED DOWN SOME NOT VERY IMPORTANT ONES AND EVEN SHOT DOWN SOME PROJECTS,+ HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A MORE RECENT MOVE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO REDUCE EXPENSES WAS BY DIRECTING POLITICAL APPOINTEES OF MINISTERS SUCH AS POLITICAL AND PRESS SECRETARIES TO CUT DOWN ON TRAVELLING.

+WE HAVE SINCE LAST MONTH PLACED A CEILING OF \$1,000 ON THEIR MILEAGE CLAIMS AND IF THEIR CLAIMS EXCEED THIS FIGURE, THEY WOULD NOT GET A SEN MORE,+ HE SAID. -- MORE 2210/MK

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ZCZC N192 (F/S)

MAHATHIR - ALLOCATIONS 3 KUALA LUMPUR

ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE SIGNS OF AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE RECOVERY, IF ANY, WAS NOT BEING FELT BY THE GOVERNMENT YET.

+THE GOVERNMENT COLLECT TAXES ONE YEAR AFTER AND AS SUCH IT WILL ONLY BE NEXT YEAR THAT WE WOULD KNOW IF THERE IS ANY RECOVERY THIS YEAR,+ HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA 2219/MK