

MAHATHIR - SMALLHOLDERS

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PONTIAN, MAY 8 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD WANTS RURAL RESIDENTS TO TAKE PART IN THE ORGANIZED KAMPUNG SCHEME IMPLEMENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVING STANDARD AND ERADICATE POVERTY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE SCHEME, PROVIDED FOR BY THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE FOURTH MALAYSIA PLAN, WOULD INTEGRATE SMALL AND SCATTERED KAMPUNGS INTO BIG SETTLEMENTS ENJOYING THE RANGE OF BASIC AMENITIES.

RURAL RESIDENTS WOULD HAVE FACILITIES SUCH AS SHOPS, CLINICS, HOSPITALS, PIPED WATER, ELECTRICITY AND SCHOOLS JUST LIKE THE URBAN RESIDENTS, HE ADDED WHEN LAUNCHING THE ORGANIZED KAMPUNG PROJECT AND THE SMALLHOLDERS SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND AT KAMPUNG PARIT BERAYA NEAR HERE.

AT THE CEREMONY ATTENDED BY ABOUT 10,000 PEOPLE INCLUDING JOHOR STATE DIGNITARIES, THE PRIME MINISTER RECEIVED \$10 MILLION AS THE LAUNCHING CAPITAL OF THE FUND AIMED AT UPGRADING SMALLHOLDER PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOME.

THE FUND WILL ENABLE SMALLHOLDERS IN THE COUNTRY TO INVEST IN ESTABLISHED INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS AND WILL ALSO PROVIDE TRAINING PROGRAMMES, SCHOLARSHIPS TO THEIR CHILDREN AND CREDIT FOR THEM TO SET UP SMALL-SCALE ENTERPRISES.

-- MORE 1545/MB

MAHATHIR - SMALLHOLDER'S 2 PONTIAN

THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF RURAL RESIDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE ORGANIZED KAMPUNG PROJECT. WITHOUT THEIR COOPERATION, THE SCHEME WOULD FAIL AND THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ENJOY ITS BENEFITS.

+THE SCHEME IS NOT TO SERVE GOVERNMENT INTERESTS BUT TO HELP LIFT THE RURAL POPULATION FROM POVERTY,+ HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNMENT FELT IT FUTILE TO ONLY DOLE OUT MONEY TO THE POOR BECAUSE THIS WOULD NOT BRING ANY LASTING BENEFIT, NO MATTER, HOW MUCH WAS GIVEN.

+HOWEVER, IF GIVEN TRAINING, AN INDIVIDUAL CAN EARN HIS OWN LIVING AND BE INDEPENDENT AND SELF-RELIANT.+

HE ALSO TOLD RURAL RESIDENTS NOT TO BE INFLUENCED BY NEGATIVE CRITICISMS OF THE SCHEME MADE BY QUARTERS WHICH DID NOT LIKE TO SEE THEM PROGRESS.

HE GUARANTEED THAT THE SCHEME WOULD IMPROVE THE EARNING LEVEL OF THE RURAL PEOPLE, THUS LEADING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ASPIRATION TO RESTRUCTURE THE RURAL SOCIETY AND BRING SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS TO THE NATION. -- MORE 1700/MB

ZCZC N075
MAHATHIR - SMALLHOLDER 3 PONTIAN

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT COULD NOT BE DENIED THAT POVERTY EXISTED IN THE COUNTRY. BUT MERE ADMISSION WITHOUT FOLLOW-UP REDRESSAL WOULD NOT MAKE THE PROBLEM GO AWAY.

HE SAID THE WAR AGAINST POVERTY NEEDED THE COOPERATION OF ALL THOSE AFFECTED THAT IS, THE RURAL PEOPLE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE TOTAL AREA OF RUBBER SMALLHOLDINGS CAME TO TWO-THIRDS OF THE LAND UNDER RUBBER IN THE COUNTRY. GROUPING OF THE HOLDINGS INTO LARGE ESTATES USING MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND BETTER MARKETING TECHNIQUES WOULD SURELY RESULT IN BETTER INCOMES FOR THE RURAL SOCIETY.

HE STRESSED THAT THE MOVE WAS NOT AIMED AT DISPOSSESSING SMALLHOLDERS OF THEIR LAND BUT AT BOOSTING THEIR RUBBER PRODUCTION AND ENABLING THEM TO ENJOY A BETTER LIFE.

THE CREATION OF LARGE SMALLHOLDER ESTATES AND ORGANIZED KAMPUNGS WOULD LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN THE RURAL POPULATION WHICH COULD EXPLOIT THE SITUATION TO EXPAND THE COUNTRY'S COMMERCIAL BASE BY OPENING SHOPS OR SHOPPING CENTRES. -- MORE 1708/MB

ZCZC N076
MAHATHIR - SMALLHOLDER 4 PONTIAN

HE SAID THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIZED KAMPUNGS AND PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE WOULD FACILITATE SETTING UP OF SMALL INDUSTRIES EMPLOYING RURAL RESIDENTS.

AT THE CEREMONY, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HANDED \$117,136.99 COLLECTED FROM THE 70 PARTICIPANTS OF THE KAMPUNG PARIT SERAYA MINI-ESTATE PROJECT TO THEIR REPRESENTATIVE, HAJI SABARI HAJI ABDUL AZIZ.

HE ALSO VISITED THE HOUSES OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND TOURED THEIR OIL PALM MINI-ESTATE. -- BERNAMA 1710/MB