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MAHATHIR-FAIR
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PULAU PINANG, AUG 2 (BERNAMA) -- THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WANTS TO BE FAIR, AS FAR AS IS POSSIBLE, IN ITS TREATMENT TOWARD THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY AS WELL AS THE STATE GOVERNMENTS, PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT THERE WAS DISSATISFACTION AMONG THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES AND STATE GOVERNMENTS OVER THE ATTENTION THEY RECEIVED FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

ADDRESSING ABOUT 10,000 PEOPLE AT THE BAYAN LEPAS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON ARRIVAL FROM KUALA LUMPUR FOR A TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE STATE, HE SAID THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES AND STATE GOVERNMENTS FELT THEY WERE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

+THERE ARE COMMUNITIES WHICH THINK THAT THEY ARE NOT GETTING WHAT IS THEIRS BY RIGHT AND THERE ARE STATES WHICH FEEL THAT THEY ARE BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN THE PROVISION OF FEDERAL ALLOCATIONS,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR-FAIR 2 PULAU PINANG

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS IN FACT STRIVING TO BE FAIR TO ALL COMMUNITIES AND THE VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS BUT IT COULD NOT SATISFY EVERYONE OR EVERY STATE.

FEELINGS OF DISSATISFACTION WOULD ALWAYS BE THERE AND EACH COMMUNITY AND STATE WOULD CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT THEY WERE NOT BEING GIVEN PROPER ATTENTION, HE SAID.

+IF SUCH THINKING IS PRESENT IN ALL COMMUNITIES AND ALL STATES THEN WE FEEL THAT OUR POLICY IS RIGHT,+ THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

THIS ONLY SHOWED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S POLICY WAS FAIR IN THAT THEY DID NOT GET EVERYTHING THEY ASKED FOR, HE SAID. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR-FAIR 3 PULAU PINANG

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID PULAU PINANG HAD DEVELOPED SINCE THE TIME OF THE BRITISH WHO GAVE PRIORITY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE.

SINCE INDEPENDENCE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD ALSO ENSURED THAT PULAU PINANG'S PROGRESS PROCEEDED UNINTERRUPTED TOGETHER WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER STATES.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN MUCH ATTENTION TO PULAU PINANG, SO MUCH SO THAT SOME GROUPS HAD FELT THAT TOO MUCH HAD BEEN SPENT ON THE STATE.

THIS HOWEVER WAS NOT TRUE BECAUSE ALLOCATIONS TO THE STATE WERE GIVEN OUT FAIRLY AND IF THE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE STATE APPEARED TO BE MORE INTENSIVE THAN ELSEWHERE, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE OF THE SMALL SIZE OF THE STATE, HE SAID.

THIS HAD CAUSED ENVY AND DISSATISFACTION AMONG CERTAIN QUARTERS ALTHOUGH WHAT WAS GIVEN TO THE STATE WAS ONLY ITS FAIR SHARE OF ALLOCATIONS, HE SAID. -- MORE
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MAHATHIR-FAIR 4 PULAU PINANG

AMONG THE MAJOR FEDERAL ALLOCATIONS FOR PULAU PINANG WAS THE FINANCING OF THE BRIDGE LINKING THE ISLAND WITH SEBERANG PERAI, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

THE PROJECT WAS DECIDED LONG AGO AND WAS A PLEDGE MADE IN THE 1969 GENERAL ELECTION BY THE THEN RULING PARTY.

THE EFFORTS INITIATED DURING THE TIME OF TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN, TUN ABDUL RAZAK AND TUN HUSSEIN ONN HAD NOW BECOME A REALITY, HE SAID.

IT WAS A PLEDGE MADE TO THE PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOW FULFILLED THE PLEDGE.

HE HOPED NO ONE WOULD SAY THE PROJECT DID NOT BENEFIT ANYONE, FOR APART FROM THE PEOPLE OF PULAU PINANG, IT WOULD ALSO BENEFIT PEOPLE IN PERLIS, KEDAH AND PERAK. -- BERNAMA

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