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B E087 AAE

MAHATHIR-CHANGES R R R R R R

BM

KOTA BAHARU, MARCH 28 (BERNAMA)

-- THE PRIME MINISTER TODAY EXHORTED THE PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY RURAL FOLKS, TO BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO FACE CHANGES AND TO ADAPT TO MODERNISATION SO AS TO CREATE A MORE PROGRESSIVE AND PROSPEROUS RURAL SOCIETY.

HE SAID A SOCIETY THAT DID NOT WANT OR LACKED THE COURAGE TO ACCEPT CHANGES WOULD DEFINITELY NEVER PROGRESS AND WOULD BE LEFT BEHIND FOREVER BY THE REST OF THE RAPIDLY MODERNISING WORLD.

+THE CAPACITY AND WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT CHANGES ARE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR ENSURING THE PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY OF ANY SOCIETY.+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID WHEN LAUNCHING THE MULONG-LATING INTEGRATED PADI PROJECT AT MULONG NEAR HERE.

+A BETTER AND MORE MODERN LIFE MIGHT BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ATTAIN IF OLD AND OBSOLETE WAYS WERE PRESERVED IN WORKING THE PADI FIELDS BECAUSE TRADITIONAL FARMING PRACTICES JUST COULD NOT MAXIMISE PRODUCTION.+

ACCORDING TO THE PRIME MINISTER, BACKWARDNESS WOULD ONLY BRING CONTEMPT ONTO A SOCIETY AT A TIME WHEN RESPECT FROM OTHERS AND EQUAL STANDING WERE THE ASPIRATION OF ALL SOCIETIES. -- MORE
2144MST 28 03 86

B E088 AAE

MAHATHIR-CHANGES 2 KOTA BAHARU R R R R R R

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT WAS WITH THIS IN MIND THAT HE WANTED THE PEOPLE TO FACE UP TO THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGES AND HAVE THE CONFIDENCE THAT THEY HAD THE POWER TO CHANGE THEIR LIFE AND FUTURE FOR THE BETTER.

+QUESTIONS ARE OFTEN ASKED ABOUT THE POVERTY OF THE RURAL POPULATION, WHETHER THEIR PLIGHT IS DUE TO POOR SOIL OR WRONG AND UNSUITABLE FARMING TECHNIQUES THAT COULD NOT YIELD MAXIMUM RESULTS.+ HE SAID.

HE SAID STUDIES CONDUCTED FROM TIME TO TIME REVEALED THAT THE CAUSES WERE UNSUITABLE PRACTICES IN WORKING THE LAND AND ATTITUDE OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY WHICH WERE TOO EASILY CONTENTED WITH WHAT THEY ALREADY HAD WHEN SUCH THINKING AND WORK PRACTICES NO LONGER HAD A PLACE IN THIS MODERN AGE.

HE STRESSED THAT EVERYONE SHOULD REALISE THAT LIFE TODAY WAS FAR DIFFERENT FROM LIFE IN THE PAST AND SHOULD STRIVE TO IMPROVE THEIR LOT INCLUDING UTILISING THE FERTILE SOIL THAT MALAYSIA HAD BEEN BLESSED WITH IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE TO GET MAXIMUM RETURNS.

ON THE INTEGRATED PADI PROJECT, HE SAID IT WAS A MODEL PROJECT TO PROVE THE VALUE AND BENEFITS OF HAVING THE COURAGE TO ACCEPT CHANGES AND MODERNISATION IN PADI FARMING. -- MORE
2157MST 28 03 86

B E089 AAE
MAHATHIR-CHANGES 3 KOTA BAHARU R R R R R R

THE PRIME MINISTER CONGRATULATED THE KEMUBU AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (KADA) ON THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT AND THE 170 OWNERS OF THE PADI FIELDS INVOLVED AND HOPED THEIR EXAMPLE WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY OTHER PADI FARMERS.

THE PADI FIELDS COMPRISING A TOTAL AREA OF ABOUT 44 HECTARES (FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PROJECT) DEVELOPED WITH MODERN AGRICULTURAL TECHNIQUES UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF KADA SINCE APRIL LAST YEAR YIELDED UP TO SEVEN TONNES OF PADI PER HECTARE COMPARED WITH ONLY ABOUT THREE TONNES BEFORE THIS.

THE PROJECT INVOLVING ONLY 20 WORKERS WAS CARRIED OUT MORE ECONOMICALLY UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC NEW APPROACH PROGRAMME AND KADA WILL DEVELOP ABOUT 200 MORE HECTARES THERE STARTING IN THE COMING PLANTING SEASON.

UNDER THE PROJECT, THE PADI FIELDS INVOLVED WERE RESTRUCTURED IN THEIR CONFIGURATION TO MAKE POSSIBLE THE USE OF MODERN AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND TO FACILITATE PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS FARM ROADS AND IRRIGATION BY KADA.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PROJECT HAD SAVED ON LABOUR AND ENABLED THE FARMERS TO HAVE TIME FOR OTHER PURSUITS SUCH AS POULTRY REARING AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR INCOME. -- MORE
2213MST 28 03 88

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B E090 AAE
MAHATHIR-CHANGES 4 KOTA BAHARU R R R R R R

EARLIER, KELANTAN MENTERI BESAR DATUK HAJI MOHAMED YAACOB REFUTED ALLEGATIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO RE-POSSESS PADI LAND DEVELOPED IN THE PROJECT.

HE SAID THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND UNDER THE NEW APPROACH WAS SOLELY TO IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF FARMERS IN THE AREA AND IMPROVE THEIR INCOME IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVE TO ERADICATE POVERTY AND BACKWARDNESS. -- BERNAMA
2214MST 28 03 86