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MAHATHIR-FISHERMEN

BM

KUALA TERENGGANU, APRIL 4, (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE TIME HAS COME FOR MALAYSIAN FISHERMEN TO USE MODERN FLEETS TO CATCH FISH IN THE OPEN SEA.

HE SAID THE ERA HAD PASSED WHEN FISHERMEN USED SMALL BOATS TO CATCH FISH IN THE COASTAL WATERS FOR THEIR OWN CONSUMPTION OR FOR SALE TO THE NEIGHBOURS.

+THE FISHERMEN MUST CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDE AND BE PREPARED TO BE AWAY FROM HOME FOR UP TO A MONTH OR TWO TO FISH IN THE DEEP SEA IF THEY WANT TO IMPROVE THEIR LIFESTYLE,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD ABOUT 10,000 FISHERMEN WHEN COMMISSIONING THE FISH LANDING JETTY AT CENDERING NEAR HERE.

THE FISHERMEN IN COUNTRIES WITH ADVANCED FISHERIES SECTORS SUCH AS JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA WERE VENTURING ONTO THE HIGH SEAS AS FAR AS FIJI, NEW ZEALAND AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC IN BIG FISHING BOATS, HE SAID. -- MORE

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+MALAYSIAN FISHERMEN CAN ALSO DO LIKEWISE IF THEY USE BIG SHIPS EQUIPPED WITH MODERN FISHING GEAR, COLD STORAGE AND FISH PROCESSING FACILITIES,+ HE SAID.

WITH SUCH MODERN FACILITIES, THE FISHERMEN NEED NOT RUSH TO LAND FOR THEIR CATCH WOULD NOT EASILY SPOIL.

THEY COULD STRAIGHT AWAY PROCESS THE FISH ON BOARD AND HAVE IT READY FOR EXPORT AS SOON AS THEY REACHED LAND, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

THE USE OF SUCH BIG AND WELL-EQUIPPED SHIPS COULD ALSO HELP REDUCE THE NUMBER OF FISHERMEN IN THE COUNTRY.

THOSE UNABLE TO VENTURE INTO THE DEEP SEA COULD OPT TO BECOME FISH DISTRIBUTORS, COLD STORAGE OPERATORS OR MANUFACTURERS OF MARINE FOOD PRODUCTS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID. -- MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE UPGRADING OF THE FISH MARKETING AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

HE ASSURED THE FISHERMEN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO HELP REALISE THESE OBJECTIVES.

AN INITIAL STEP IN THIS DIRECTION WAS THE BUILDING OF FISH LANDING JETTIES IN THE COUNTRY, HE SAID.

ALSO PRESENT WERE DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH ALI, MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI HAJI WAN MOKHTAR AHMAD AND LOCAL DIGNITARIES. -- BERNAMA

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