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MAHATHIR-SALARIES

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 13 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY WHILE THE GOVERNMENT ACKNOWLEDGES CIVIL SERVANTS' ENTITLEMENT TO A SALARY RAISE, IMPLEMENTING IT IS ANOTHER MATTER.

+WE NOW HAVE TO STUDY WHETHER WE CAN AFFORD IT (A SALARY RAISE) AS THIS INVOLVES NATIONAL FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION,+ HE SAID WHEN APPROACHED BY REPORTERS AFTER ATTENDING A DIALOGUE WITH ARMED FORCES GENERALS AT THE DEFENCE MINISTRY HERE.

HE SAID IF THE GOVERNMENT COULD AFFORD IT, IT WOULD MEET THE SALARY ADJUSTMENT DEMANDS OF ABOUT 800,000 CIVIL SERVANTS.

THE GOVERNMENT CONCEDED THAT THEY WERE ENTITLED TO A PAY HIKE, AND WAS IN FACT GIVING ATTENTION TO THE MATTER, HE SAID.

HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT'S STAND WAS THAT AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT WAS IN NO POSITION TO ENTERTAIN THE DEMANDS DUE TO NATIONAL REVENUE CONSTRAINTS. -- MORE

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HOWEVER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DID INDICATE THE POSSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT GRANTING A PAY HIKE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS IF NATIONAL INCOME INCREASED.

+AT A TIME OF ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN, NOT ONLY DO WE NOT RAISE SALARIES, WE ALSO CUT DOWN ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT+, HE SAID.

REPORTERS ALSO ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER WHETHER AN ALLOCATION FOR A SALARY RISE WOULD BE INCORPORATED IN THE 1989 BUDGET TO BE TABLED IN PARLIAMENT IN OCTOBER.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REPLIED HE WAS NOT SURE, AND SAID THE MATTER WAS UP TO THE FINANCE MINISTER.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT AT THE DIALOGUE, HE BRIEFED THE ARMED FORCES TOP BRASS ON VARIOUS GOVERNMENT POLICIES INCLUDING THE LOOK EAST, PRIVATISATION AND THE MALAYSIA INCORPORATED POLICIES.

THIS WAS TO ENSURE ALL QUARTERS UNDERSTOOD CORRECTLY ALL THE POLICIES, HE SAID. -- BERMANA

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