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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 31 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HAVE DETAIL STATISTICS ON EVERY BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN LANGKANI BUT HAS PROOF TO SHOW THAT TRADE THERE INCREASED AFTER JAN 1, 1987 WHEN IT BECAME A TAX-FREE ISLAND. HE SAID IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT THAT IN 1987, TOTAL TAX COLLECTION WAS \$1.81 MILLION WHILE THAT FOR THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF THIS YEAR AMOUNTED TO \$1.43 MILLION.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS REPLYING TO ENCIK S.S. SUBRAMANIAM (BN-HULU SELANGOR).

HE SAID THAT THE NUMBER OF CARGO SHIPS ENTERING LANGKANI ALSO SHOWED A SHARP INCREASE, FROM 20 TO 25 SHIPS A MONTH IN 1987 TO 33 TO 32 A MONTH FOR THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF THIS YEAR.

AIR CARGO INCREASED FROM 10,453KGS DURING THE 1986 TO MARCH 1987 PERIOD TO 33,116KGS FOR THE APRIL 1987 TO JANUARI 1988 PERIOD. -- MORE  
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THIS SHOWED A 308 PER CENT INCREASE, HE SAID.

IN TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID SEVERAL MAJOR PROJECTS WERE IMPLEMENTED ON THE ISLAND SINCE 1985, INCLUDING THE EXTENSION OF THE AIRPORT, UPGRADING OF TWO MAIN ROADS FROM THE AIRPORT TO KUAH AND PADANG LALANG AND A WATER SUPPLY PROJECT. ALL THESE PROJECTS WERE COMPLETED IN 1987.

HE SAID THAT THE EXPANSION OF THE LANGKANI COUNTRY CLUB HOTEL WAS COMPLETED AT THE END OF 1986 AND WAS NOW KNOWN AS THE LANGKANI ISLAND RESORT. IT NOW HAD 213 ROOMS COMPARED WITH 100 PREVIOUSLY.

ANOTHER INTERNATIONAL CLASS HOTEL WITH 300 ROOMS WAS UNDER CONSTRUCTION NOW. THE FIRST PHASE OF THE HOTEL WAS EXPECTED TO BE OPERATIONAL AT THE END OF NEXT MONTH.

TO A QUESTION FROM ENCIK LEE LAM THYE (DAP-BUKIT BINTANG), DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT SMUGGLING WAS BOUND TO OCCUR IN ANY TAX FREE PORT, ADDING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN VARIOUS MEASURES TO CHECK SMUGGLING IN LANGKANI.

REPLYING TO HAJI BUJANG ULIS (INOPT-SIMUNJAN), DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID FOREIGN AIRLINES WOULD ONLY BE ALLOWED TO HAVE FLIGHTS TO LANGKANI IF MAS COULD NOT MEET DEMAND. -- BERNAMA  
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