

U E738 AAE  
MAHATHIR-BUSINESS R R R  
BM

LANGKAWI, JUNE 4 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT WILL PARTICIPATE IN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES HERE IF TRADERS PERSISTED IN SELLING GOODS AT EXPENSIVE PRICES.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID FOODSTUFF AND OTHER GOODS SOLD IN LANGKAWI WERE MORE EXPENSIVE THAN IN KUALA LUMPUR.

EXPRESSING HIS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THIS SITUATION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT HAVE TO OPEN ITS OWN BUSINESS OUTLETS IF TRADERS DID NOT BRING DOWN THE PRICES.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AT PULAU SINGA BESAR AS PART OF HIS ONE-DAY VISIT HERE, HE SAID IT WAS ILLOGICAL FOR TRADERS ON THE ISLAND TO SELL GOODS AT A HIGH PRICE AFTER THE GOVERNMENT DECLARED THE ISLAND TO BE DUTY FREE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REMINDED TRADERS THAT SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE IN BUSINESS ON THE ISLAND, THE MOVE WOULD PUT THEM AT A DISADVANTAGE.-- MORE

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+WE PROVIDE DUTY FREE FACILITIES BUT TRADERS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF IT BY MAKING EXCESSIVE PROFITS,+ HE SAID.

TO A QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT GIVING A DEADLINE TO THE TRADERS TO BRING DOWN PRICES.

HE ALSO DISMISSED THE POSSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT APPOINTING PERNAS AS THE SOLE AGENT TO IMPORT DUTY FREE GOODS TO THE ISLAND.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT NEED NOT APPOINT A SOLE IMPORTING AGENT AS ANYONE WAS FREE TO IMPORT THE GOODS.

EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS BRIEFED ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT BY COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT TO LANGKAWI IN OCTOBER.-- MORE

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HE LATER VISITED A ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN TELOK DATAI, A MARBLE FACTORY AND A NEW JETTY BEING BUILT IN KUAH AND PULAU SINGA BESAR.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THESE PROJECTS EXCEPT FOR THE NEW JETTY WHICH HAD TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY A NEW CONTRACTOR.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID HE WAS SATISFIED WITH THE WILD LIFE PARK PROJECT IN PULAU SINGA BESAR WHICH WOULD BE A RECREATIONAL PARK AND SANCTUARY FOR ANIMALS SUCH AS DEERS AND BIRDS.

THE PRIME MINISTER, ACCOMPANIED BY DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH, ARRIVED HERE YESTERDAY AND STAYED AT THE PELANGI BEACH RESORT, THE RETREAT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH LEADERS AFTER THEIR MEETING IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL IN OCTOBER.-- BERNAMA

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