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R E 774 A A E
MAHATHIR-PAD1

BM

SUNGGAI PETANI, AUG 23⁹⁰ (BERNAMA) -- THE HIGHER PADI PRICE SUBSIDY THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK WILL BE EFFECTIVE FROM THE HARVEST SEASON AS OF THE BEGINNING OF LAST MONTH, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ACCEDDED TO THE NUMEROUS APPEALS FOR THE INCREASED SUBSIDY TO BE GIVEN ALSO TO FARMERS WHO HAD SOLD THEIR CROP FOR THIS SEASON.

THE APPEALS HAD COME AFTER THE PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED ON AUG 16 THAT THE SUBSIDY WOULD BE INCREASED FROM 810 TO \$15 A PICUL.

FARMERS WHO HAD SOLD THEIR PADI FOR THE SEASON WOULD RECEIVE THE ADDITIONAL SUBSIDY WHEN THEY PRODUCE THEIR SALES RECEIPTS! DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD REPORTERS AFTER ADDRESSING A GATHERING AT A PADANG HERE.

HE SAID THE ARREARS IN PAYMENT THE GOVERNMENT HAD TO BEAR WAS NOT HIGH BECAUSE THE HIGHER SUBSIDY THIS YEAR WAS FOR ONLY SIX MONTHS.

THE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE FOR A YEAR WAS \$139 MILLION, BUT FOR THIS YEAR IT WOULD ONLY BE HALF THAT AMOUNT, HE ADDED. -- MORE

2016MST 23 08 90

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R E 776 A A - E

MAHATHIR-PAD1 2 SUNGGAI PETANI

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THERE WAS NO POLITICAL MOTIVE IN BACKDATING IMPLEMENTATION TO JULY 1, ADDING THAT THE BN GOVERNMENT REALISED THE PLIGHT OF THE PEOPLE AND WOULD DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE FOR THEM.

+THIS SUBSIDY WILL ALSO ENABLE THE PEOPLE LEAD A MORE COMFORTABLE LIFE,+ HE SAID.

OPENING A PEDESTRIAN MALL IN PULAU PINANG LAST SUNDAY, HE HAD ALSO SAID THAT THE SUBSIDY WAS INCREASED TO PREVENT A HIKE IN THE PRICES OF PADI AND RICE WHICH HE FELT COULD MAKE THE POOR SUFFER MORE.

ON THE BN'S PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE COALITION WAS READY FOR IT.

HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE BN ELECTION MACHINERY WAS EFFICIENT AND STRONG ENOUGH TO FACE THE OPPOSITION, AS HAD BEEN PROVEN IN THE BY-ELECTION IN THE KIJAL STATE CONSTITUENCY IN TERENGGANU RECENTLY.

ASKED FOR THE DATE OF THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WOULD BE HELD ANY TIME NOW AND ADDED: +BE PREPARED, YOU OPPOSITION PARTIES.+ -- MORE

2036MST 23 08 90

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MAHATHIR-PAD1 3 SUNGAI PETANI

ON DEVELOPMENT IN SUNGAI **PETANI**, HE SAID THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WATER TREATMENT PLANT IN PINANG TUNGGAL WAS AN EFFORT BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE **FACILITIES** THERE AND IN NEARBY AREAS WHERE INDUSTRIES WERE **COMING UP**.

HE SAID 500 HECTARES WOULD BE OPENED THERE FOR NEW **INDUSTRIES**, AND SEVERAL **LARGE** COMPANIES SUCH AS MITSUBISHI AND MATSUSHITA HAD APPLIED TO INVEST THERE. *

MCA PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR **LING LIONG SIK**, MIC PRESIDENT DATUK SERI S. SAMY **VELLU**, GERAKAN PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR **LIM KENG YAIK** AND KEDAH MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI HAJI OSMAN **AROFF** ALSO ADDRESSED THE GATHERING.

THE LEADERS RAISED **VARIOUS ISSUES**, INCLUDING THE ACCUSATIONS THE OPPOSITION HURLED AT THE GOVERNMENT.

DATUK SERI **HAJI** OSMAN SAID THE PEOPLE OF KEDAH WOULD CONTINUE **TO** SUPPORT THE LEADERSHIP OF DATUK **SERI** DR MAHATHIR.

DATUK SERI DR LIM KENG **YAIK** REMINDED THE PEOPLE NOT TO ALLOW ANYONE TO DISRUPT THE HARMONY THAT PREVAILED IN THE COUNTRY. --
BERNAMA

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