

DR M: GOVT WILL NOT REDUCE CHERAS TOLL

S - 4 SEP 1990

By M. Veera Pandiyan

MALACCA, Mon. — The Government will not reduce toll charges for the new Jalan Cheras interchanges, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said this decision was "final" as the rate was reasonable.

The Government, he said, would not reduce the

toll to appease the residents just to get them to support the Barisan Nasional in the general election.

"Whenever we do anything, people always relate it to politics.

"When we increased the padi subsidy by 50 per cent, they said we wanted to fish for votes," he told reporters after addressing a Barisan gathering at the expo centre in Air Keroh near here.

"So if we want to fish for Cheras votes, we could reduce the toll rate or do away with it.

"But we will not because the toll rate is reasonable and necessary," he said.

"If the Government's considerations were solely based on winning votes, all government funds would be misused all the time.

"We do not do this. Maybe the Opposition

would do this if they gain power," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the Government had spent a lot of money to upgrade Jalan Cheras.

"If motorists think carefully, they would realise that they would save more than \$1 in the long run by using the road.

"If they use the old congested road, the journey would be longer, more time will be wasted and their fuel cost would be

higher," he said.

He said the \$1 rate was cheap when compared to that in other countries where motorists paid \$1 per km in toll.

"Our rate is among the lowest. But however low we impose, people will always demand for it to be reduced.

"For example, if the Government had set the toll charge at \$2, they would probably ask for it to be reduced to \$1."