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MAHATHIR-BORDER RRR

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(P)

JITRA, JAN 20 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT MAY OPEN THE MALAYSIA-THAILAND BORDER CHECKPOINTS EVEN AT NIGHT IN ITS BID TO ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID HERE TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING THIS FOLLOWING THE VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY) 1990.

THE VARIOUS CHECKPOINTS ARE NOW OPENED BETWEEN 6AM AND 6PM.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER HAVING LUNCH AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE KUBANG PASU DISTRICT OFFICER IN CONJUNCTION WITH A VISIT TO HIS PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PROPOSAL WAS IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE OF ALLOWING MORE TOURISTS TO VISIT THE COUNTRY.

THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO ALSO VISITED THE BORDER AREA AT BUKIT KAYU HITAM, SAID THE CHECKPOINTS WILL NOT HOWEVER BE OPENED ON A 24-HOUR BASIS BECAUSE OF CERTAIN PROBLEMS. -- MORE
1643MST 20 01 89

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SECURITY FORCES NEED TO CARRY OUT BORDER PATROLS TO CURB SMUGGLING ESPECIALLY OF DADAH AND WEAPONS, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WILL BE MEETING SECURITY AUTHORITIES IN KUALA LUMPUR SOON OVER THE NEED TO HAVE MORE EFFECTIVE ANTI-SMUGGLING CONTROL.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY KEDAH MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI HAJI OSMANAROFF, ALSO VISITED SEVERAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN KUBANG PASU, INCLUDING THE JITRA DISTRICT HOSPITAL, THE JITRA YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE, THE PERMANENT CAMPUS FOR THE UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA IN SINTOK AND THE LPN COMPLEX IN KODIANG.

HE SAID HE WAS GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THEIR PROGRESS EXCEPT FOR THE JITRA COMMUNITY HALL WHICH HAS YET TO BE COMPLETED EVEN AFTER A CHANGE OF THREE CONTRACTORS.

TO A QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS WILLING TO MEET SEMANGAT 46 PRESIDENT TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH BUT WOULD BE +RELUCTANT+ TO ACCEPT EIGHT RESOLUTIONS FROM THE PARTY, WHICH INCLUDED CALLING FOR THE REVIVAL OF THE OLD UMNO. -- MORE
1705MST 20 01 '89

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REFERRING TO A STATEMENT BY TENGKU RAZALEIGH THAT HE WANTED TO BECOME ONLY THE PRIME MINISTER IF HE WAS OFFERED TO REJOIN THE CABINET, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID TENGKU RAZALEIGH COULD HAVE THE POST IF HE REJOINED UMNO.

+THE POWER TO DETERMINE WHO SHOULD BE THE PRIME MINISTER IS NOT MINE BUT BELONGS TO UMNO MEMBERS. HE SHOULD THEREFORE JOIN UMNO AND STAND FOR ELECTION, IF HE WINS, THEN HE CAN BE THE PRIME MINISTER*+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

TO ANOTHER REMARK BY TENGKU RAZALEIGH THAT HE SHOULD STEP DOWN AS PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS NO REASON FOR HIM TO DO SO AT THE MOMENT EXCEPT FOR HEALTH REASONS, -- BERNAMA
1717MST 20 01 89