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MAHATHIR SAYS AGEING PROBLEM IN FELDA SCHEMES TO BE RESOLVED

Mahathir-Felda

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JITRA, Sept 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister <sup>92</sup> ~~D~~ Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the government is seeking ways to overcome the problem of ageing settlers in Felda land schemes.

Having been successful in their studies, the children of Felda settlers were reluctant to follow in the footsteps of their parents, he added.

In time, the problem of shortage of labour would arise in the land schemes where even now some elderly settlers were paying others to work the land for them, he told residents of Kubang Pasu at a gathering at Sekolah Kebangsaan Felda Guar Napai, near here.

Dr Mahathir said the government's approach in the initial years of independence was no longer suited to present times as better jobs, more comfortable dwellings and better incomes elsewhere drew the younger generation away from the land schemes.

Another problem facing the settlers was the question of +faraid+ where the land had to be divided equally among all their children under Islamic tenets, he added. -- more

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Mahathir-Felda 2 Jitra

He said the government proposed to introduce the share system facilitate equal division compared with land division which could not be done accurately.

The proposal was not aimed at denying the people of their right to the land but to ensure fair distribution, he added.

Dr Mahathir also said many developing countries were impressed by Malaysia's land schemes and they had expressed interest to learn from the country's rich experience.

The Felda land schemes, covering 1.3 million acres (about 520,000 hectares), made it the biggest plantation in the world, he added.

He said the government was striving to develop Malaysia's industries and companies should open factories outside the Klang Valley to benefit the rural people. -- more

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Mahathir-Felda 3 (last) Jitra

He also urged the people to keep abreast of developments and have a willingness to accept change as the government strove to create a progressive community.

Malaysia would become a developed nation by the year 2020 and earn the respect of the world provided its people could show that they were capable of doing what others could do if not better, he said.

He called on parents to give priority to their children's education to make them hard-working and disciplined citizens with high moral values. -- Bernama

▼10/09/16-42MST