

# Proposal on highland highway

TANAH RATA: A private firm is interested in building the proposed highway between Genting Highlands and Cameron Highlands via Fraser's Hill, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here yesterday.

He said the firm had submitted its proposal to build the highway with minimum damage to the environment.

The Government, he said, would go ahead with the project as soon as it had obtained the best offer.

"There will be little felling of trees and cutting of the hillslopes. On steep slopes, piles will

be used," he said.

Dr Mahathir, here to open the Cameron Highlands' annual flower festival, told a press conference the project had to be privatised as it would cost more than RM1 billion.

"It is costly because the Government wants to protect the environment of the highlands."

Dr Mahathir said financial aid would be given to the firm undertaking the project by the state and Federal governments "as we understand the number of vehicles which will use the highway when it is completed will be few and the returns for the project

will be small."

He said the opening of the North-South Highway had opened up much land for development from Bukit Kayu Hitam to Johor Baru. *12 AUG, 1996*

"Likewise, the proposed highway from Genting Highlands to Cameron Highlands will open up land for tea plantations, orchards and flower cultivation."

Earlier, Dr Mahathir received a new orchid hybrid *Umno Malaysia* from Pahang Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Mohamed Khalid Yaakob and launched a pictorial book entitled *Wonders of the Heartland Pahang* by C.T. Fong.